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THE INFALLIBILITY OF Human Judgment,

Its DIGNITY *and* EXCELLENCY.

BEING

A New ART of *Reaſoning*, and diſcovering *Truth*, by reducing all diſputable Caſes to general and ſelf-evident Propoſitions. *Illuſtrated*, by bringing ſeveral well known Diſputes to ſuch Self-evident and Univerſal Concluſions.

WITH

The SUPPLEMENT, anſwering all Objections which have been made to it, and the Deſign hereby perfected, in proving this Method of *Reaſoning* to be as forcibly concluſive and univerſal as Arithmetick, and as eaſie. Alſo a Diſſertation on Liberty and Neceſſity.

The Fourth Edition.

To which is now added,

A POSTSCRIPT, obviating the Complaints made to it, and to account for ſome Things which occurr'd to *it* and the *Author*.

By Mr. LYONS.

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Note, The Author hath hitherto thought a Preface unneceſſary, but nevertheleſs finds it neceſſary to advertiſe ſome very haſty Readers, that the Title Page (more eſpecially) and Contents are a material Part of this Treatiſe, and are deſign'd to ſhew the Intention of the whole Work, and what is to be expected from it.

THE

THE INFALLIBILITY OF Human Judgment, &c.

Chap. I.

THAT Man is most excellent in his kind who useth to greatest Advantage those distinguishable Properties and Excellencies wherein he differs from other Animals.

Reason is the distinguishing Excellency, Dignity, and Beauty of Mankind: Whosoever, by Teaching or otherwise, hinders

a Man from uſing his *Reaſon*, diſhonours him, and degenerates him to ſomething of leſs worth than he is.

There is no other Uſe of *Reaſon*, but to judge of Good and Bad, Juſtice and Injuſtice, Wiſdom and Folly, and the like; that a Man may thereby attain Knowledge to diſtinguiſh Truth from Error, and to determine his Actions accordingly.

Reaſon cannot be hinder'd from doing its Office, without Violence or Artifice is us'd in bringing Objects to the Senſes or Apprehenſion: It doth not alter any thing, as they are introduc'd to the Senſes or Apprehenſion, Judgment doth determine.

'Tis an Abſurdity in Speech, to ſay a Man believes any thing that's contrary to his Reaſon or Senſes.

If a Perſon who hath Power to inflict Puniſhment arbitrarily, ſhould perſwade you, that a certain hard black Subſtance is both ſoft and white, he may raiſe Amuſements, and talk of having peculiar Faculties of Seeing, which others have not; and that the Rays of the Light do fall in ſuch a manner, that it muſt neceſſarily be ſo.

If you fear his Power, or have ſuch a Reverence for him, that you will not, or durſt not, contradict him, you may pretend to ſuſpect a Fault in your Senſes, and ſo be tacitly ſubmiſſive; you may acquieſce, and not

not diſpute or oppoſe it: But ſo long as you can ſee or touch it, your Judgment doth tell you, it's both hard and black; and 'tis either a Cowardly or Political Lye to allow the contrary.

The Reaſon of Man doth as infallibly judge of Wiſdom and Folly, Juſtice and Injuſtice, and the like, as of Colours; and any diſputable Propoſition, religious, moral, or political, may be thus brought to the Judgment, and try'd.

There was a good Monarch of a People inhabiting part of *Africa* under the Torrid Zone, who in a long Reign over them, and by a multitude of his Actions, had done nothing but what was the Effect of Wiſdom and Juſtice: He at length left them, and travel'd into this Northern Climate, from whence a Perſon (after remaining with him one Winter) went into his own Country, and produc'd Inſtruments, pretending them to be under their King's Hand, conſtituting him their Deputy-Governour; and among other things which he pretended their King had injoin'd them, he expreſly commanded them to believe, on pain of Death, that the Waters in the Rivers were ſo harden'd by Cold, that Men and Horſes walk'd on 'em. Now this being repugnant to every thing their Senſes weae converſant with, makes it impoſſible for them to have any ſuch Con-

ception, that ſo thin, ductile, and fluid an Element can by Cold be harden'd and fix'd.

And notwithſtanding he prevail'd with ſome by Intereſt, and terrified others, yet the Wiſeſt among them did, on mature conſultation, diſcover him, by this means, to be an Impoſtor, and expel'd him as ſuch; and this not only for their own Safety, but in defence of their King's Honour, which was much leſſen'd and ſlander'd; for 'twas accuſing him of groſs Folly and Injuſtice, to expect they ſhould believe what he before knew they had no Faculties of apprehending: If it had been in his power to have procur'd them thoſe Faculties, and did not, 'tis ſtill worſe.

But for a Prince to make Alterations in his Laws, on purpoſe to inflict dreadful Puniſhments for not believing what is impoſſible to be believ'd, is the higheſt Folly and Barbarity.

Nothing but Wickedneſs and Diſorder can be the Effect of ſuch an Impoſition; thoſe who pretend to believe it are guilty of Hypocriſie and Lying, and have a juſtifiable Excuſe for uſing the like Deceit and Barbarity with their fellow-Subjects. Thoſe who have the Courage to refuſe it, fall into Rebellion and Deſtruction. Nor can a Prince have any Advantage, but muſt neceſſarily know he hath loſt the Eſteem and Vene-

Veneration they had for him, and that every one looks on him as a Fool and a Monſter.

No Man ever pretends to deny the Cenſure which Reaſon makes in this Caſe; but they go about, by Circumlocution and Sophiſtry, to prove, that by the Laws of his Country 'tis in his power to lay what Commands he pleaſes, and to puniſh them for not obeying: Which amounts only to thus much, That it is in his power to be juſt and merciful, or unjuſt and barbarous: So he chuſeth the latter.

Nor is there any Excuſe, or other Defence, for the Folly, but a peremptory Aſſertion, that you muſt not, and ſhall not queſtion it.

There is in this caſe a great Confuſion and Amuſement rais'd, under the Sanction of a Venerable Name, which if it takes, an Authority is ſubſtituted in the room of Reaſon, over thoſe who are too idle, or too fearful, to examine it; which tends to nothing but the uſurping a tyrannical Dominion over the Minds of Men; and when once they are blindfolded, they may be enſlav'd and led about at the pleaſure of the Impoſture.

Whoſoever therefore pretends to have a Commiſſion from a Prince that's indiſputably Wiſe and Juſt, and nevertheleſs affirms

that the Commiſſion directs him to lay fooliſh and unjuſt Commands, and to require unlimited and vexatious Obedience, ought to be reſiſted as an Impoſtor, for impoſing on the People, and abuſing their Prince's Virtues.

The Impoſer in the firſt Caſe doth not go about to tell you, that you do not know the thing to be hard and black, but will have you believe he knows it to be white and ſoft, and you muſt take it on his Word. Neither doth the Impoſtor in the laſt Caſe ſay it is not fooliſh and unjuſt; but he tells you, You muſt regard his Authority, and not uſe your Reaſon.

'Tis therefore an indiſputable and univerſal Truth, That *Human Reaſon* is a competent Judge of Wiſdom and Folly, Juſtice and Injuſtice, Good and Bad, and the like.

Chap. II.

TEN thouſand different Men may pretend to Sacred Authorities, with as many differing Precepts for Religion and Manners reduc'd to regular Schemes; if they are not to be examin'd but by themſelves

ſelves and their own Rules, they muſt of conſequence be every one good, tho' never ſo repugnant to each other, or to common Senſe.

There is no Authority but what hath ſome others that are repugnant to it, and condemn it; from whence it comes to paſs that there is ſcarce a ſingle Perſon in the World but ſuppoſes the generality of Mankind are ſtill, and have always been, impos'd on by falſe Authorities.

True Authorities are liable to Additions and Alterations, and if they have no Alterations, are nevertheleſs liable to the Cenſure of evil Perſons, who may affirm it, tho' falſly.

No Authority muſt be allow'd implicitly, before it be try'd whether it be *good* or *bad*: There is no poſſibility of trying one Authority by another.

A *Mahometan* will no more have his *Alcoran* try'd by the *Bible*, than a *Chriſtian* will have his *Bible* try'd by the *Alcoran*. You muſt firſt ſhew him ſome Defects in *his* contrary to Reaſon, and prove *yours* to be agreeable to Reaſon, before you can expect he will hear you name it with Patience.

If Reaſon is not to examine all Authorities, all Authorities in the World are *good* to the Perſons pretending to believe them, and they are in the right, and do no more

than their Duty in defending them.

Which makes ſuch a ridiculous and abſurd Concluſion as is hardly to be expreſs'd in intelligible Terms, (*viz.*) That every Man muſt believe his *Antagoniſt* in the right, tho' at the ſame time he believes he merits the greateſt Puniſhment for being in the wrong.

The way to avoid theſe Abſurdities, and to diſcover and defend the Truth, is to adhere to Reaſon, as not only a competent and infallible Judge, but the only Teſt to which all Authorities muſt ſubmit to be try'd, before they can be known to be *good* or *bad*.

This Judgment of Man is an involuntary Faculty, acted upon by Objects, and determines without any Conſent of the Will; like a Mirrour, which gives a true Image of every thing that can be brought to it; and according to the Certainty or Uncertainty of the Evidence, or the Plainneſs or Obſcurity of any Matter, the Judgment determines it to be more or leſs doubtful, true or falſe.

One Man may proceed to an Action on leſs Certainty than another thinks fit to do, but this is no Effect of the Difference in judging the Thing, but an Act of the Will; he hath more Courage than the other, and hath a mind to run a greater hazard; to which

which Caſe is applicable a common, but very proper Cenſure, That whoſoever runs great Hazards, proceeds raſhly, without conſulting his Judgment.

No Man can determine what Colour a Thing is of which he ſees only at ſuch a diſtance where Colours cannot be diſtinguiſh'd: If there is not therefore ſufficient Certainty, or ſome Matter of Fact, to demonſtrate ſomething clearly to the Apprehenſion, there is no Authority or Power can force the Judgment to determine whether it be *good* or *bad*, &c.

All Authorities and Means whatſoever, to force or perſwade the Belief are altogether needleſs; for if the Matter is brought to View, a true Judgment is unavoidable.

Chap. III.

IF a Man views, and examines into the State, Condition, and Original of the Univerſe, which way ſoever he turns himſelf, he ſees an infinite Variety of Things compos'd put into a very regular Order: A congruous and diſtributive Juſtice is ſeen in

in the Production and Compoſition of every ſingle Thing, and in the Diſpoſition of it in relation to the whole.

Now, ſeeing here are ſo many certain Matters of Fact done regularly, wiſely, and juſtly, 'tis impoſſible for us to help conceiving, but that there was ſome Power, Force, or Cauſe doing theſe Things, which was wiſe, juſt, and regular.

The Relation which theſe Productions have one to another, makes an Unity in the whole, and demonſtrates that there was not to each a ſeveral Cauſe, but one general Cauſe to the whole Univerſe. To this we add the comparative Knowledge of ſuch Faculties which the Mind of Man is compos'd of; and from thence we conclude, that ſome one ſuchlike Mind or Being is the Agent of theſe Facts.

From hence we proceed to try if we can make any further Diſcovery of what this Agent is, by inſpecting into more of his Works: And the farther we trace him, the more Wiſdom and Perfection do we find in him, till at laſt we diſcover ſuch a vaſt Immenſity of *Wiſdom*, *Knowledge*, and *Power*, that we find it to be infinite and incomprehenſible; to which the *Reaſon* of Man, tho' 'tis of the ſame kind, and ſerves to make this Diſcovery, yet it bears no more Proportion

portion with it than one ſingle Point doth to the whole Univerſe.

To this Great Being, Mind, or Author of all things, we generally give the Name of GOD.

The Imagination and Fancy only of there being no Author of *Nature*, (or whatever other Name Men pleaſe to call it) makes ſuch Diſcord and Jarring in the Underſtanding, as produces nothing but Abſurdities, is very unpleaſant, unſatisfactory, unuſeful to Knowledge, and no way deſirable; nor can have any room in the Mind of Man, till by ſome Artifice his *Natural Reaſon* is defac'd.

There is no ſuch thing as diſcovering any *Secrets of Nature*, as practiſing *Natural Philoſophy*, or arriving at the Knowledge of any Thing that doth not fall accidentally in our way, without tracing the Footſteps of *Nature*; which Footſteps of *Nature* are a prolifick Invention and Action, *Perfection*, *Wiſdom*, and *Juſtice*: That is to ſay, *Nature* is an Inventor and Actor that hath Wiſdom and Juſtice. Now, there is no Conception of any ſuch Thing in the Mind of Man, but by forming to our ſelves an Idea of a Mind or Spirit.

Therefore whoever talks thus of *Nature* is no Atheiſt, but hath a true Notion of GOD, and is only humorous and croſs-grain'd,

grain'd, in giving a different Denomination to the ſame Thing.

Chap. IV.

IN ſearching into the Works of this *Author of Nature*, we find *Stars*, which are demonſtrated to us to be as large, and ſome vaſtly larger, than this whole Terraqueous Globe which we inhabit; and by their receiving Light from the ſame Sun, we find they had the ſame Author for their Original.

To this we add the Knowledge of his filling every Place with ſome Animals; and, That every Thing hath not only one Uſe, but as many as 'tis capable of; as the Waters, which do not only ſerve to help the Earth in its Productions, and for the Uſe of Man, and other Animals on the Earth and Air, but is alſo full of Fiſh and Animals it ſelf, which have their proper Generation and Habitation there.

From hence we infer, 'tis very probable that thoſe Stars are alſo inhabited.

And

And 'tis indeed almoſt an Abſurdity to think the contrary; and a Reflection on his Wiſdom and want of Perfection, to imagine he made ſuch prodigious Bodies for no Uſe, but Man to gaze on: But what ſort of Inhabitants, of what Shape, or what Faculties they have, is impoſſible for Man to know.

The meditating on a Being ſo vaſtly wiſe, good, and powerful, begets naturally a profound Reverence to him, and a Propenſity to pay him ſuch Honours and Duties as are ſuitable to this Notion of him, which amounts to Adoration.

But during theſe Contemplations, in comes a Perſon, and tells you, You are very right in your Notions; That it conduces very much to magnifying the Power of GOD: That you muſt alſo adore and worſhip Him: That he hath had a Revelation from GOD, in which he is commanded to tell you, You muſt go further, and believe there are exactly ſuch Men as are here. At this you ask, by what means he can prove it; and, whether GOD hath told him how it may be known? But, inſtead of a Demonſtration of the Matter of Fact, he goes about to tell you, You muſt believe it without any Proof; and if you do not, that ſame Power who produc'd you and thoſe Things will

will puniſh you after the moſt dreadful and painful Methods that can poſſibly be invented: That you know very well 'tis in his Power ſo to do.

From hence he goes on to prove, as far as he can, the Truth of this pretended Revelation, but of the Matter of Fact ſays nothing, as knowing it to be to no purpoſe.

Now this additional Account which he gives of GOD, and His Commands, is directly oppoſite to the Notion of Juſtice and Wiſdom, by which we firſt of all diſcover'd his Divine Exiſtence.

Therefore the more Evidence he gives of his pretended Authority, the more he confounds that which he pretends to teach (that is) the magnifying of GOD, by deſtroying the whole Foundation upon which the Knowledge of GOD is built.

We have no Notion of GOD at all, but that He is ſuch a reaſonable Mind as is in Man, but in the moſt exalted Perfection.

If where *Reaſon* is in the greateſt Perfection, there is found ſuch fooliſh and unneceſſary Trifles, Injuſtice, and Barbarity, we can't expect there is any Thing inferior that can pretend to do or know better.

This deſtroying the natural Notion of *Juſtice* and *Wiſdom*, brings the Mind of Man into a total Deſtraction, and leaves him no cer-

certain Rule for the Conduct of his Life and Actions, but *Good* may be *Bad*, or *Bad Good*.

But there is no ſuch Thing as wholly ſtifling Man's *Reaſon* from checking him in doing ill, and approving him in doing well, which is commonly call'd *Conſcience*; nor obſcuring altogether the ſame *Reaſon*, or *Light of Nature*, from making daily Diſcoveries of the *Wiſdom* and *Juſtice* of GOD.

Yet liſtening, out of Curioſity, to this Perſon, who pretends to prove a *farther Diſcovery* of this Deity, immediately from it ſelf; but his pretended *Diſcovery* accuſing GOD of Injuſtice, Barbarity, and Folly, raiſes ſuch a Confuſion in the Mind, as produces nothing but Abſurdities.

For the more *Credit* this Perſon is of, and the more *Probability of Truth* in this Revelation, the leſs *Credit* can be given to what it attempts to prove; becauſe the nearer to *Truth* this Revelation is, the leſs Opinion muſt we have of GOD's *Wiſdom* and *Goodneſs*; and the leſs Value and Eſteem for Him is the unavoidable Conſequence.

Thus the whole Scheme is broke to pieces, as well of the *Power* and *Perfection* of GOD, as of his *Wiſdom* and *Juſtice*: For if there is no Certainty of his being *Wiſe* and *Juſt*, he can have no *Ability* to do what

what we have imagin'd: That is, in other Words, There is no ſuch *Wiſe*, *Powerful*, *Perfect*, and *Juſt Being*: Or, in plain Terms, *There is no GOD.*

Thus, for want of Courage and Reſolution in exerting *Reaſon*, is Mankind artfully betray'd into *Atheiſm*, *Scepticiſm*, and ſtupid *Bigottry* and *Slavery*.

CHAP. V.

THerefore when any *Reveal'd Religion* offers it ſelf to our Conſideration, it ought to be examin'd by *Reaſon*; ſtedfaſtly aſſerting, That the general *Reaſon* of Mankind (that is to ſay, *Light of Nature* and *Conſcience*) is a competent Judge of what is *Juſt* and *Wiſe*, *Good* and *Bad*; and 'tis impious and blaſphemous to affirm any thing of GOD that is *Fooliſh* or *Unjuſt*.

When *Reveal'd Religion* is firſt introduc'd, there is nothing taught but a total Submiſſion to the Will and Commands of GOD; a Correction of the Appetites and Paſſions; a refining the Minds of Men; Humility, Patience, and a perfect Reſignation to Providence; to ſlight and diſregard

regard any Honours and Promotions in this Life, and wholly to endeavour at Happineſs in a future State; and on the defect of this, to expect Puniſhments after this Life.

Now, here being nothing to the detriment of Mankind, they eaſily fall in with it, and ſubmit to be guided by thoſe Holy and Venerable Perſons who teach them; and who pretend not to teach them any thing of their own, but produce a *Reveal'd Authority* for it; which being allow'd to be ſufficiently evidenc'd, they ſubmit themſelves to it, and ſo direct others.

'Tis neceſſary, for Devotion and Piety ſake, and for their better Inſtruction, to aſſemble in little Societies, under the Care of theſe Guides, who taking the Opportunities from the Neceſſity there is of Decency and Regularity, and the Willingneſs of People to be govern'd by them, to inſinuate by degrees an abſolute Submiſſion to themſelves, as Interpreters of this *Revelation*.

By the Influence they have over People, 'tis no hard matter, either by Deluſion or Intereſt, to make themſelves and Doctrines *really* or *ſeemingly* neceſſary to Princes and Legiſlative Powers, and then ſoon work themſelves into Honours, Preferments, and Dignities; and, growing ſtill more negligent of the Morals preſcrib'd in the Rule,

live and enjoy Pleaſures with Delight and Exceſs.

But whatever Alterations they introduce, are either annex'd to the Rule, or deriv'd from a better Interpretation; ſtill retaining the firſt Aſſertion, That *if they do not obey this Rule in every Thing, they muſt ſuffer (to an endleſs Eternity) the moſt dreadful Pains that the Wit of Man can imagine.*

Men ſeeing ſo great a Concern depend on it, think it their Duty to examine into what is there taught; and finding the aforemention'd Perſons have done evil Things, differing from the Rule, nevertheleſs ſtill depending on the Truth and Authority of the *Revelation*, do neceſſarily conclude they muſt act according to the deliver'd Rule, on peril of their Damnation. And the other falling into Vices which are alſo contrary to the *Light of Nature*, theſe Inquiſitive Perſons do further confirm themſelves to be in the right, and that the others are departed from it.

Chap. VI.

NOw, if in this Rule there ſhou'd be Words of a foreign and obſcure Derivation, alſo Allegories, and ſome Places of doubtful Conſtruction, then neceſſarily follows differing Conſtructions of the Words and Allegories, and of the doubtful Places they affirm ſomething contrary to one another, according to their Inclinations or Underſtanding, or to the differing Inſtructions they happen on.

So that the beſt and moſt conſcientious Perſons, who are reſolv'd not to be deluded into their Damnation, do diſſent and divide from them. And from hence doth unavoidably ariſe a multitude of different Opinions and Diſſentions.

Reaſon might help here; but whatever they differ in, they all agree, That this Rule being immediate Divine Revelation, whoſoever interpoſes to examine it by *Reaſon*, deſerves Eternal Puniſhment.

Thoſe who differ, or have contrary Opinions, do think each other loſt to endleſs Eternity: And as they think each other

to have merited this at GOD's Hands, 'tis no hard matter to perſwade them they merit Puniſhment from Men. And to hate whom GOD hates, is the neceſſary Conſequence.

Whilſt they are perſwaded 'tis GOD and Religion, and their own Eternal Happineſs they are ſerving, they neceſſarily think the more Injuries they do the Enemies of their Religion, and the more they ſuffer in Defence of their own, the more they merit Rewards from GOD.

Thus is the moſt barbarous Hatred, Enmity, and Contempt of one another introduc'd among Mankind.

And thus far may Men go, who are the moſt Good and Religious, according as they are taught the Interpretation of theſe pretended or corrupted Rules.

But there doth not alſo want Wicked Perſons, who make their Advantage of this bigotted Diſpoſition of Mankind, by expoſing other Men's Errors, and pretending to Reformation and more Sanctity, do deceive many ignorant Perſons to as great Errors as the former.

A plauſible Pretence to Inſpiration, and ſome Deceits for Miracles, is as much as is requir'd to ſupport it for Reaſon, is damnable.

The

The moſt deplorable of all theſe Evils, and which is the Support and Continuance of all the reſt, is when the Education of Mankind happens to be under the Direction of theſe Tyrannical Impoſtors, whereby they are early bigotted to whatever is proper only to thoſe Principles; and by this means they have it in their Power to impoſe Authoritative Maxims, and thereby ſet Bounds and Stops to Improvements in Knowledge; and where this is not ſufficient, even Puniſhments are allotted for the mentioning or diſputing on ſeveral uſeful Things in Philoſophy, for no other reaſon, but becauſe they thwart theſe Doctrines, and alſo the Tryals and Puniſhments, not in the Civil Magiſtrate, but in their own Power.

This *Error* and *Slavery* is the natural Production of *All Religions* that teach Examination of their Authorities by *Reaſon* to be damnable.

For although the Introduction might be true Devotion and Piety, alſo the ſeveral Diviſions ſince might ariſe from a Deſire to reform from the Errors of others, and fear of *Damnation*; yet they ſoon degenerate, and their Guides uſurp an Authoritative Power.

CHAP.

Chap. VII.

IF a Scheme of *Religion* was at this Day fram'd by the common Concurrence of all Mankind, or ſent by indiſputable *Divine Revelation*; if there was no Error or Objection againſt it, but alſo agreeable to *Reaſon* it ſelf, except annexing this Penalty to it, That it ſhould be damnable for any Man to vary from it, or queſtion it by *Reaſon*; that very Sentence would make it impoſſible not to be vary'd from.

For, in proceſs of Time, ſome of the Words wou'd grow old and obſcure; ſome Men wou'd make differing Interpretations, for Intereſt or Humour; ſome Copies of it might have accidental Errors, and be liable to real Additions and Interpolations, or to Suſpicion of ſuch.

The Confuſion doth not ariſe from the Truth or Falſhood of the *Revelation* it ſelf, but from the laying ſo prodigious a Streſs and Penalty on the believing a Thing to be faultleſs which is liable to Faults, and not allowing *Reaſon* to examine it.

And

And this is the Secret Artifice by which Teachers of *Religion* become Unqueſtionable, and aſſume *Abſolute Power*.

Thus are Mankind betray'd into Ignorance and Barbarity, to Wars, Seditions, and Rebellions, Civil Authorities inſulted, Governments deſtroy'd, or erected and modell'd at their pleaſure.

Nor is there any other Miſchief, but Mankind is liable to, who are under Subjection to Perſons whoſe Wills and Actions are above the Inſpection of *Reaſon*; who being allow'd to derive all their Power from *GOD* and *Religion* only, whereby all Laws and Politicks that defend and ſupport them are alſo *Divine Authorities*, and all that oppoſe them are damnable, and not to be diſputed.

Chap. VIII.

Although moſt Nations are under this miſerable Tyranny, or liable to it, and threaten'd with it, yet hath not any Perſon produc'd any one real or pretended *Scheme of Religion*, containing Laws ſufficient for the Government of any Country.

No

No Laws or Politicks were ever yet made or deliver'd that were perfect at once, but (as Neceſſity requir'd) were added to, and alter'd. GOD, who is the common Original of all Men, regards no Nobility or Deſcent among them; a *good Plebeian* may be a better Man than his Governours.

Mankind is naturally endow'd with *Reaſon* ſufficient to provide Laws, and invent Methods of Government.

To ſay Government is of immediate *Divine Revelation* or *Authority*, is accuſing GOD of Imperfection; and of Folly and Impertinence, to make miraculous Interpoſition when the *Reaſon* of Mankind was beforehand ſufficient.

Men have naturally ſome Poſſeſſions or Properties which are each Man's own, and which 'tis Unjuſt for another to take away.

Experience taught them, that they can more happily and ſafely enjoy their Properties in regular Communities than ſingly: From whence Laws and politick Governments took their Original, and are the Reſult of Neceſſity and Convenience, in enjoying and defending their Liberties and Properties to the greater Advantage.

The

The *Good* and *Benefit* of Government is for the Perſons governed; and this is the original Law of Laws, and Authority of all Authorities, to which all Governours and Government, Laws, Politicks, and Cuſtoms regarding the common Concern of the People, ſtand refer'd, and are thereby to be try'd.

As all Laws and Politicks are alter'd and alterable as the *Good* and *Benefit* of the Nation doth more appear or require, ſo, if there are any Laws, Politicks, or Cuſtoms to the publick or univerſal *Detriment*, 'tis highly juſt and reaſonable to alter them.

There are no Cuſtoms or Politicks to the publick Detriment, but what are introduc'd or ſupported by Fraud and Violence: 'Tis Injuſtice and Oppreſſion to perſiſt in the Uſe of 'em, and whoſoever (without Exception of Perſons) openly oppoſes, or fraudulently hinders, the amending and altering ſuch Politicks, Laws and Cuſtoms, is either an open Enemy, or private Traytor, to that Country and People.

Men have *Reaſon* ſufficient to find out proper and regular Ways for improving and perfecting their Laws.

If mov'd by Pride and Raſhneſs, they will precipitate themſelves into Confuſion, or thro' Ignorance and Cowardice betray themſelves to Slavery; they have the evil Effects of their Follies to convince 'em of their Errors.

To affirm, That ſome millions of People ſhall have their Lives, Liberties, and Properties at the diſpoſal of any ſingle Perſon; or, That there is any Right, divine or civil, by any Law, Cuſtom, or Politicks whatſoever, for any Man to govern at his Pleaſure; is not only againſt the common Senſe and Knowledge of all Men, but alſo a vain and uſeleſs Aſſertion, which hath its Riſe and Being in noiſie Tongues only, and produces but a ſhort-lifed Amuſement.

For no Tyrant will truſt to it, without ſufficient Force to defend it; nor any People ſubmit to it, longer than they can find Means to help themſelves.

Government founded on the General Good is ſtrong, and ſelf-defenſible, hath no need of any other Foundation and Support than *Nature*, *Juſtice*, and *Reaſon*.

No Man can have any Buſineſs, Pretence or Pleaſure in looking for any other Authority to govern by, or form Schemes of Government from, unleſs he hath ſomething

thing to act or vindicate againſt *Nature*, *Juſtice*, and *Reaſon*.

To ſet *Religious Authority* againſt the general *Law of Reaſon*, is to bring the Power of the Civil Magiſtrate, as well as the Liberty of the People, to a precarious Dependance on thoſe who can give equal Sanction to Rebellions againſt Governments, or Tyranny in the Governours.

And tho' Tyrannical Religion and Arbitrary Government ſupport each other, yet no Governors aiming at Unjuſt Power, and bringing themſelves thereby to a Neceſſity of vindicating their Proceedings by this pretended *Religious Authority*, but ſoon find they are in the ſame miſerable Slavery with their People.

Thus ſeeming-great and abſolute Monarchs are under moſt vexatious Reſtraints, and can purſue no Deſigns, tho' their own Honour and Intereſt, as well as that of their Country, is concern'd, if the Intereſt and Will of theſe their Superiour Tyrants are againſt it.

A Man may have a Right to the proper Eſtate and Poſſeſſions of his Predeceſſor, and the Publick Peace and Benefit may make it neceſſary for him to ſucceed in the Government, but there's no Native Right for any Man, one more than another, to aſſume Dominion over any People

contrary to the general Conſent, Peace, and Benefit of thoſe People.

If any Perſon, by any Inheritance, Law, Cuſtom, or Power whatſoever, pretends to diſpoſe or take part of the Properties of a People without their Conſent, it is in his Power to take the whole; and that very part may be ſubſervient to him in ſeizing the remainder, and deſtroying the Proprietors.

'Tis therefore dangerous, and againſt Nature, Juſtice, and Reaſon, to continue ſuch Power.

'Tis juſt, natural, and reaſonable, and the Good of the People govern'd doth require an Alteration of thoſe Laws or Cuſtoms, for the preventing ſo great a Miſchief.

When a Caſe is thus clearly view'd and examin'd, *Judgment* makes a Deciſion involuntarily, and the Argument is at an end, a deciſive Sentence paſt which every Man's *Reaſon* is ſatisfied with.

If any Perſon ſhall afterwards pretend to tell you, That ſuch an Author or Perſon, or ſuch a Religion, ſays otherwiſe; it makes no Alteration in the Caſe, altho' the Aſſertions of ſuch Author may be mix'd and blended together with part of the former Argument, and Words may be confuſedly multiply'd, yet 'tis not the ſame Argument,

gument, but another of a different kind, and is asking the Queſtion, Whether or no that Author, Perſon, or Religion is juſt or reaſonable.

But for the real Caſe diſputed: A deciſive Sentence is paſs'd, even in the Judgment of the very Oppoſer; and, be his Obſtinacy never ſo great, the Fault is in his Will, and he lyes againſt his own Conſcience.

After this manner may all diſputable Poſitions in Morals, Politicks, or Religion, be decided, by being reduc'd to ſelf-evident Truths.

If in a dreadful Storm of Thunder and Lightning a terrible Voice ſhou'd be heard, iſſuing from the Clouds, by Ten thouſand People, commanding them to enter on Record, That Seventy Years hence a Perſon not yet born ſhould be hang'd for a Sacrilege which his Grandfather had committed this day; this wou'd not hinder any one of thoſe Ten thouſand People from knowing it to be a groſs Injuſtice, Folly, and Barbarity; neither cou'd it have any other Effect than to affright and terrifie them into a Complyance contrary to their Knowledge, and to ſtifle their Conſciences.

Becauſe 'tis an irreſiſtible Truth, That *'tis unjuſt to puniſh an Innocent Man for a Guilty one's Fault.*

It is alſo as irreſiſtible a Truth, That the Author or Original of this Univerſe is ſome perfectly Wiſe and Juſt Being, incapable of any ſuch Wickedneſs and Folly.

Therefore from that Juſt and Wiſe Being never proceeded any ſuch thing.

There is then no more to be done in all ſuch Caſes, but inſtead of Logical Amuſements and References to Authors and Authorities, to ask the Queſtion of *Human Reaſon*, Whether 'tis Juſt and Wiſe, according to the general Notions of *Juſtice* and *Wiſdom*; as in the Examples and Methods 'foregoing.

So eaſie and Natural is the way of diſcovering Truth, did not Men ſuffer themſelves to be artfully deluded out of it.

CHAP. IX.

THE whole Diabolical Myſtery of this *Black Art* conſiſts in exciting the Paſſions, gratifying ſome, and provoking others; and thus by pleaſuring momentary

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ry and brutiſh Inſtinct, is *Paſſion* ſubſtituted inſtead of *Reaſon*; whereby Men are taught to pleaſe themſelves, oppoſe their Neighbours, and to practiſe their *Opinions* (or rather their *Aſſertions* and *Humours*) one on another.

Thus are Men firſt work'd up to a Perturbation of Mind, then to a Privation of Reaſon; from whence ariſe diſorderly Motions of the Animal Spirits; and the Religious Sanctity given to this *State of Corruption* makes a Conſtitutional and Habitual Diſtemper, which is a dangerous, miſchievous, and true Species of *Madneſs*.

The Agitators in this Helliſh Wickedneſs are the true Devils, and Deſtroyers of Mankind; Traytors to the general Peace of the World, and to all the Countries where they live; Enemies to Humanity, and impious Blaſphemers and Diſhonourers of GOD, a Scandal and Interruption to true Piety!

Theſe have degenerated Mankind from the Excellency and Dignity of their Species, and debaſed them to Brutality, deſtroy'd the Light of Truth, and left them in Error and Ignorance, by the Miſts which they have rais'd, ſo that the Underſtanding of Mankind is nothing but *Obſcurity* and *Confuſion*.

'Tis therefore high time to ſee if we can't find ſome Divine *Spirit* capable of moving on this dark *Chaos*, to bring forth Light.

BOOK

BOOK II.

CHAP. I.

Judgment, *Reaſon*, *Light of Nature*, or *Common Senſe*, is one and the ſame Thing, only varies its Name according to its different Uſes and Appearances, or rather at the Will and Pleaſure of the Denominator.

It is a Faculty that would lead a Man to nothing but *Truth* and *Goodneſs*.

And tho' the Notions of *Good* and *Bad* may be the Effect of Experience, or receiv'd by the Senſe, if a Man hath but a few of thoſe Notions, or a great many, (that is to ſay, if he hath much *Knowledge*, or little) if this *Knowledge*, and the Faculty judging it, ſhould be both of 'em the Reſult only of *Experience* and *Senſe*; if the Cauſe from whence it ariſes be never ſo obſcure, or never ſo plain; be it acquir'd, pro-

produc'd, deriv'd, infus'd, created, or begotten, it matters not in this Caſe.

There is ſuch a Faculty, known to us by the Names of *Judgment*, *Reaſon*, *Light of Nature*, *Conſcience*, and *Common Senſe*, that doth determine, without any Conſent of the Will, which of thoſe Notions are *good*, and which are *bad*; doth dictate which to *chuſe* or *refuſe*.

And all Errors, both in Opinion and Practice, are in the *Will* only, in not chuſing as the *Judgment* dictates.

One Man may have more Opportunities, or be more induſtrious than another, ſo may be a better Man, having attain'd to more *good Notions*, and can do more *good Actions*.

But what little the other doth know, he hath as infallible and great a Power of judging the Goodneſs of as the other hath.

Notions by which Knowledge is produc'd, do enter by the Senſes and Experience, and are the Materials on which the Apprehenſion, Judgment, and Reſolution act; from which there are alſo other Actions produc'd in the Mind, ſuch as Inferring, Comparing, Compounding, and Inventing; aud until Ideas were enter'd the Mind for them to act on, we knew nothing of ſuch Faculties.

But

But 'tis abſurd to infer from thence, that Apprehenſion, Judgment, and Reſolution are created or produc'd from theſe Ideas, or from the Senſes that convey 'em.

If a Perſon born with proper Eyeſight was kept from his Birth to Manhood blindfold, that he could not uſe his Sight, he can have no manner of Notion of Sight, nor is there any Poſſibility of making him frame any Conception of what it is, till the Obſtacle is remov'd, and Objects of Sight do thereby preſent themſelves to his Eyes; but neither do the Objects he ſees, nor the Light that ſhews 'em, create or produce the Senſe of Seeing; the curious Organ of the Eye was before perfect, and the viſive Spirits in their proper Chanels.

Chap. II.

THE Senſes, by which the firſt Images are produc'd, ſeem to be too narrow and few for the Mind; the Apprehenſion is of an immenſurable extent. If there were Fifty ways, inſtead of Five, to convey Ideas, it could comprehend 'em,

and

and the Judgment is perfect, and could determine to Infinity: The Will alſo ſeems to have the Capacity of a Power vaſtly beyond what it can now exerciſe.

But when we examine the Mind in this View, it ſeems, in reſpect of the Will, to be in a ſtate of Imperfection: A Man would be apt to think it was learning and improving under the tuition of ſomething ſtill greater than it ſelf, who ſeeing that want of Experience makes it run on to Action, without obſerving whether the Effect of the Action be good or ill, (like one newly ſenſible of his Power, and glad of all Opportunities of exerciſing it) hath therefore thought proper to confine the Apprehenſion to a few things; and alſo circumſcribe the Will, that it may ſee and learn, by what little is in its power, how to behave it ſelf when it ſhall have more.

But the Judgment having no Evil, is unconfin'd; as if Man, tho' taught by ſomething elſe, is deſign'd to be a free Agent of himſelf, and to have the Glory and Benefit of his *good Actions*, and the Diſhonour and Detriment of his *bad*.

Notwithſtanding that our Contemplations run ſo naturally to this great Capacity of the Mind, yet it is ſo circumſcrib'd

ſcrib'd in this Body, that we meet with ſome Interruption in purſuing the Thought, becauſe 'tis difficult for us to know that it hath any other Ways and Methods of *perceiving*, or Power of *acting*, but what muſt be either done by the Inſtruments of the Body, or the Notion thereof convey'd to us by ſuch Reſemblances as we are us'd to: For even our inmoſt Thoughts and Reflections can't be convey'd to one-another, nor can we produce 'em to our external Senſes, but by framing them into the form of Words, which enter'd firſt by Hearing.

Therefore if the Mind hath any other Ways of Perception and Action; if it cannot invent Means to convey it to our Memory, and explain it by ſome ſuch Ideas as have enter'd our Senſes, we cannot utter, expreſs, or know it.

But the Mind finding it ſelf thus confin'd, that it cannot get ſuch a number of Ideas and Materials to work on; and alſo that it cannot communicate, produce, and explain, without great difficulty, what it doth frame, for want of more Senſes and Inſtruments of Action, falls to contriving, compounding, and improving what it hath into Artificial Senſes: Thus are Microſcopes, Teleſcopes, and other ſuch Machines form'd. And Writing had its Original

ginal from the Incapacity of the Senſe of Hearing, in conveying the Operations of the Mind into diſtant Places and Times; and ſo the Mind invented a Method of doing it by Sight.

Even *Speech* it ſelf was originally produc'd and invented by a Neceſſity which the Mind had of conveying more Ideas to it ſelf.

The Organs of the Voice, and of Hearing, in many Brutes, are as well fitted for Speaking as a Man's; and had a Brute a Mind reſtleſs and active, wanting Ideas, and deſirous of communicating and improving its Knowledge and Actions, it would as eaſily frame Words as a Man did at firſt.

The Mind doth thus receive and convey Ideas by more Ways than is naturally allotted it: There are evidently Bars and Stops in theſe Inſtrumentsof Conveyance, which the Mind endeavours to ſurmount, which Endeavours of the Mind are Evidences of certain pure Operations of the Mind diſtinct from the Senſes.

A Machine is compos'd, all the Parts proportion'd, the Dimenſions ſet, the Motion regulated in the Mind: This is as much the pure Production of the Mind, without any Aſſiſtance from the Senſes, though the Idea of the Materials were

long

long ſince convey'd there by the Senſes, as the making of it is afterward the proper Operation of his Hands, tho' the Iron and Braſs were not made by him.

Brutes have all the Functions of the Body in as great Perfection as Men; their Blood and Spirits circulate as well, and as quick; their Senſes are as perfect, and as exquiſitely finiſh'd.

They have alſo the ſame *Mediums*, as of Light to bring Objects to the Sight, and Air to the Hearing; their Animal and Vital Spirits have the ſame Mechanical and Mathematical Motions and Figures; ſend forth as ſubtile *Effluvia*, and as fine Particles; yet none of this ever produc'd ſuch prodigious Improvement and Invention as Man hath; not ſo much as the Art of Speech, even tho' they have been taught Words, yet having no want of the Conveyance of any Ideas more than they have, they never uſe them as Words, but as differing Sounds only.

The Difference then is in the Capacity of their Minds: The Mind of a Brute performs nor invents no more than is neceſſary for its Body and Contingencies.

The Mind of Man perceives, invents, and performs fifty times more.

Now

Now ſeeing the Materials *of which*, and and the Inſtruments *by which*, are the ſame to the one as the other, and yet differing Operations are perform'd;

The Difference of the Operations muſt be in ſome Power operating.

Therefore the Power operating, doing, and perceiving, is ſomething diſtinct from the Materials and Inſtruments, whereby one makes not all the Uſe that might be made of what he has; the other has not a fiftieth part of what it wants and would uſe, and therefore invents and contrives to ſupply his Neceſſities.

Since the Motions and Images of theſe Materials, and the Organs and Means conveying them, are in every reſpect the ſame, and this Power operating on them ſo vaſtly differing, 'tis plain it had not its Being from any of thoſe Materials, or Images and Motions of them.

'Tis impoſſible for our Underſtanding to purſue this Enquiry further, without making a ſeparate Notion, and giving a diſtinguiſhing Denomination to it.

And ſince it is not deriv'd or form'd of this Matter, nor of the Motion of it, we muſt conceive it to be not Material, and therefore call it (for the preſent) an Immaterial Mind.

The

The chief Cauſe of the Difficulty Men make in receiving this, is not from any real Obſcurity in the Caſe it ſelf, but ariſes from a bigotted Antipathy, founded on an arbitrary Maxim, that a Brute has not an Immaterial Mind: So, by admitting one Abſurdity, they throw themſelves unawares on another.

A Bird can frame a Neſt of proper Materials, chuſe ſome, and refuſe others; build it of a fit Magnitude, alſo at a proper Time, before it actually wants it, and in a proper Place, and contrive it defenſible againſt Accidents.

Inſtinct in this Caſe is, the Body wanting ſomewhat, and by the Senſe of Feeling conveying the firſt Idea of it to the Mind, but ſometimes the Mind of a Brute 'foreſees a Want to come; and although it is ſomething difficult for us to apprehend how this Foreſight can happen from meer Matter only, yet ſuppoſing the firſt Idea of it to be convey'd by ſome Senſe or Inſtinct, the Mind doth nevertheleſs contrive Means to ſupply this Want.

If this can be done without ſome Power operating which is diſtinct from the Matter operated *on*, *by*, and *with*, then by the ſame means may a Ship be built, or a Book wrote.

The Error and Confuſion is thus produc'd: 'Tis allow'd as an inconteſtibie Truth, that a *Brute* hath no Immaterial Mind, and alſo that a *Man* hath.

Now both theſe are aſſerted without any Examination, but are taken on Tradition; and tho' one of them happens to be true, and the other falſe, yet the Reaſon why one is true, is no more known to the Perſons affirming it, than are the Reaſons of the others being falſe.

From whence it happens that ſeeing ſome Actions in Brutes of the ſame nature with thoſe produc'd by the Mind of Men, they immediately doubt of the true Aſſertion; and taking it for granted that the Figure and Motion of Matter produces Invention and Thought in Brutes, endeavour to find out by what mechanical means 'tis perform'd alſo in Men.

Tho' the Ideas on which the Mind operates are convey'd by the Senſes, and we explain the Operations of the Mind to our ſelves, and to one-another, by ſuch means as our Senſes are us'd to, yet have not thoſe Ideas the ſame Images, nor are the Operations perform'd after the ſame manner as we explain 'em: Of which we have an evident Demonſtration in Men deaf and dumb.

We

We explain no other Method of Thinking, but it is as 'twere whiſpering of Words to our ſelves.

When we debate, affirm, object, and anſwer in our Mind, we fancy to our ſelves an Idea of talking and arguing by Words; and theſe Thoughts ſeem to be in our common Language, and in no foreign Words; ſo that we have *no Notion* of what our *Thoughts* are, but *Words*.

Yet do theſe deaf and dumb Perſons thus think, affirm, object, and anſwer in their Minds, explain their Thoughts to themſelves, produce 'em to their Senſes, and to Others, and yet have no Idea of Words.

Knowledge therefore is produc'd by the Mind, by *Apprehenſion*, *Judgment*, and *Reſolution*, and is not the Production of any ſuch *Motions* of Matter; but any *Motion* or *Inſtrument* that the Mind can procure to convey the firſt notion of Things, will ſerve its turn.

'Tis therefore an active Power craving *Knowledge* that actuates Bodies, and makes uſe of all the Functions thoſe Bodies are capable of, to tranſmit ſuch Things to it as it is deſirous to act on.

And by this means only can we account for the Induſtry of the Deaf, who ſupply the Defects of Hearing and Speaking by

Actions and Geſtures: And if this ſame Mind was in Brutes, and craved after *Knowledge*, it would as certainly uſe the Organs of Hearing and Voice, and convert them to Speech, as it hath in Men: And as it doth contrive theſe Actions in the Deaf, whoſe Deſign, Nature, and Fitneſs for ſuch a Uſe as the admitting and tranſmitting *Knowledge*, perceiving and relating *Hiſtories*; then comparing in the Mind, and relating others by only Actions and Geſticulations, wou'd be ſo far from the Belief of any Man, that he cou'd never allow it, did not daily Facts make it irreſiſtible.

As is alſo the Concluſion naturally ſucceeding this Obſervation, and the Compariſon between *Men* and *Brutes*.

That there is an Immaterial Mind diſtinct from the Bodies of *Men* and *Brutes*, by which theſe Bodies are actuated.

The Mind of a *Brute* is confin'd, or confines it ſelf, only to the Neceſſities of the Body, and ſo uſes as much Power, Knowledge, and Invention as beſt ſerves to ſupply thoſe Neceſſities, and no more, making it ſelf ſubſervient to the Body.

The Body of *Man* is ſubſervient to his Mind, and tho' circumſcrib'd by the Body, yet is not confin'd to the Laws and Neceſſities of it only, but aiming at infinite *Power* and *Knowledge*, makes the Body ſerve it

it in gaining *Knowledge*, and exerciſing its *Power* to the utmoſt that the Organs and Matter of it can be contriv'd to extend to.

Chap. III.

When the Senſes and Inſtruments of this Body are all at reſt, and ceaſe from acting, we have many Phantaſms or Repreſentations which are remember'd when waking, the greater part of which we can't underſtand, or make any thing of. But ſometimes it happens that a View of a Tranſaction that hath not been yet in being, or is only to be done the next Day, or ſome Days after, is by this means preſented to us; ſometimes by a real View of the Thing it ſelf, or by ſymbolical Repreſentations; other times by Contraries, or by any common Notion that a Man hath heard; if ſuch a Thing be dreamt of, it ſhall ſignifie ſuch Accident to happen. Very often ſuch trifling Occurrences, and alſo Things of much greater moment, are ſeen.

'Tis an Error to think, in this Caſe, that the *Judgment* is aſleep, becauſe he ſhall dream of his doing ſome evil Action which he wou'd abhor waking.

If a Man dreamt he was cutting or killing another, this may perhaps be only an Endeavour of the Mind to explain to him, that ſome Perſon will do him an injurious Action the next Day.

For the Ideas, when they do ſignifie any thing, are only the Mind, who perceives the tendency of other Spirits or Things to Actions, and the Memory endeavouring to form them into ſuch Characters as 'tis converſant with from the Senſes.

But for the moſt part the Memory of Things paſt, the Conſtitution of the Body, Diſorders by Paſſions and Commotions, do cauſe ſuch a medly and addition, that but little can be clearly made out: It may be alſo we want Experience and Obſervation.

The proper Viſion of the Mind is commonly only ſome inſtantaneous View, or ſingle Action; for when the View or Action alters, 'tis for the moſt part the interpoſing of Phantaſie, and other Diſorders.

But altho' we can't often make out much to foreſee what will happen afterward, yet thus much we can conclude on, That the Mind

Mind hath Perception of Things without the Senſes, and that have had no Motion or Being in Matter.

So frequent are theſe Operations of the Mind, Foreknowledge of Things, and explaining them to us by Memory, that the reaſon why 'tis ſlighted is not from any Proof that it wants, but from a Neglect in obſerving it.

The idle and fabulous Uſe that is commonly made of Dreams, makes Men of Senſe rather aſham'd to own or talk of the Truth, than not to admit it, or take notice of it to themſelves.

Our not being able to prove how ſuch Foreknowledge is produc'd, is a ſtrong Confirmation of the main Point aim'd at.

It wou'd not be Actions of Immaterial Beings perceiving and acting with one another, and having Methods of Perception of Things which Bodies have not, if we cou'd explain thoſe Methods by our Material Senſes, which act on nothing but Matter.

We can no more demonſtrate this, than we can by what Idea's, Images, or Methods deaf and dumb Men think and argue in their own Minds: Nor cou'd we admit the Truth of it, any more than of thoſe Perſons telling their Thoughts by Geſtures, did not frequent Matters of Fact make it impoſſible to be withſtood.

'Tis

'Tis evident, that ſometimes we ſee by our Dreams that the Mind hath ſuch Knowledge and Methods of Action and Perception as never enter'd by the Senſes; and 'tis highly probable that it hath ten times as much at that time, which the Memory cannot communicate.

Since it hath Knowledge without the Senſes at one time, 'tis capable of the ſame at another.

Tho' the Explanation of theſe Things may be perform'd by ſome Methods ſuitable to the Union the Mind hath with the Body, yet the Actions themſelves are done without any Help from the Body.

Which is no other than its having for that time a kind of diſtinct Exiſtence.

We can't help therefore conceiving it to be a Spirit capable of exiſting by it ſelf without the Body, and not being liable to the Accidents thereof.

CHAP.

Chap. IV.

This Review and Examination of the Mind may ſerve as a general Example of the Method Man takes in acquiring Knowledge (as well in natural Philoſophy as in all other Caſes) how he comes to be obſtructed in the Proceſs, and by what means theſe Obſtructions may be overcome.

The great Capacity of the Mind, beyond the narrow Limits of the Body, appears eaſily, which is ſo pleaſing a Notion, that the Will runs giddily on, and without examining further, takes up a Reſolution of affirming the whole Syſtem of the Immortality without any other Foundation; here are two Dangers to be obſerv'd.

The one is reſolving on a thing, becauſe we like it.

The other is making a greater Concluſion than the premis'd Circumſtances will admit of.

Whereby though the Caſe afterwards proves true, yet is there no Knowledge of the Truth, or on ſo ſhallow a Foundation,

that it cannot bear the ſhock of the Objection which ſucceeds (*viz.*) that this vaſt Capacity is no more than the Effect of Senſe and Experience.

Going on further in comparing the Minds of Men and Beaſts, and Obſervations on deaf Perſons, we find that the Mind hath Operations of its own, though they are on Matter, yet it appears to be ſomething diſtinct from the Body; but here ariſes another Obſtruction from a contrary Paſſion to the former, that is, an Antipathy againſt a Brute's having an Immaterial Mind; and becauſe we can't conclude, from theſe Obſervations, that a Man hath a Mind, without alſo allowing a Brute one, do rather chuſe to part with our own Immateriality, than with our Hatred to the Brute.

This being at length ſurmounted, the great Capacity of the Mind, and its Immateriality being diſcover'd, we endeavour to trace it farther, till we find it capable of a ſeparate Exiſtence, and that it hath Actions and Perceptions without any Help of the Senſes.

And in this we meet with a remarkable Inſtance of the Danger of being bigotted to common Opinions, and ſuffering our ſelves to be laugh'd out of the Obſervation of Dreams, whereby the greateſt Demonſtration

tion of the Soul's Immortality lies neglected and loſt.

But when we come to conſider the View we have of the Soul's Exiſtence without the Body, the great Capacity of it, and the irreſiſtible Imagination of its Communication with other great, intellectual, and ſpiritual Beings, our Contemplations carry us to the higheſt Pitch of Admiration and Delight, and to an uneaſie Deſire of purſuing the Knowledge of it.

Therefore when a Man hath paſs'd and overcome thoſe Difficulties by his *Natural Reaſon*, (and there is no other way of doing it) we ſuppoſe him ſtrong enough to reſiſt any Impoſtor, who, under Pretence of Religion, ſhall arbitrarily impoſe abſurd Notions of the Soul, and make it damnable to enquire into the Truth of its own Exiſtence.

Such Attempts as theſe ought to be reſented as injurious to Humanity, and the Perſons ſo impoſing them might be juſtly condemn'd by the common Conſent of Mankind, to have that Mind he hath ſo little Uſe for, confin'd to ſerve the Appetites of ſome Brute, where he might enjoy the Brutiſh Irrationality he ſo much likes, and would degenerate others to.

Phyſical and Metaphyſical Opinions, as well thoſe tending to Religion as Philoſo-

phy, are Reſults and Concluſions taken from the Diſcovery and Obſervation of certain Things ſeen, and Matters of Fact.

Theſe Reſults and Concluſions are the Effects of Conceptions which ſucceed each other, from a Conſideration of theſe Matters or Things.

Which Things and Matters come under the common Cognizance and Obſervation of all Mankind.

Religion and Knowledge is not confin'd to any Perſons who have particular Faculties of perceiving, judging, and improving thereby.

What is uſeful is for general Benefit and Inſtruction.

It may nevertheleſs be poſſible for a Perſon to want that Means of Evidence, or Method of perceiving thoſe Things or Matters, which others have; for which Reaſon he can't attain to ſuch Opinions or Concluſions: But theſe Defects are viſible and demonſtrable.

We can't expect a Man who never dream'd himſelf, to have the Opinion (on his own Knowledge) of the Soul's diſtinct Exiſtence, taken from the Obſervation of Dreams, becauſe he wants the Evidence of the Matter of Fact on which 'tis founded.

'Tis

'Tis as Unjuſt and Fooliſh to deſire this, as to ask a Blind-man to decide a Controverſie about Colours.

And for the ſame Reaſon 'tis alſo impious, and blaſphemouſly accuſing GOD of *Injuſtice* and *Folly*, to ſay he hath commanded or requires any ſuch thing.

In all other Religious and Philoſophical Enquiries, as well as in theſe of the Being of a GOD, and the Immortality of the Soul, the Things ſeen, and Matters done, APPEAR and ARE the ſame to the common Senſes of Mankind, to one as well as to another.

The Judgment of all Men will make the ſame Determination, if the Thing hath the ſame Appearance.

Since then the Judgment of Men, nor the Things from whence theſe Reſults take their Original, cannot err or differ, and yet there is a Difference in the Opinions and Concluſions, this Difference muſt proceed from the Method of conceiving, by which means (in the courſe of theſe Conceptions ſucceeding each other) there are ſome Additions or Diminutions made in the Imagination only to the Thing or Matter ſeen or done; or ſome other artificial Obſtruction which hath amus'd the Judgment, and hinder'd its Operation.

How theſe *Additions*, *Diminutions*, *Alterations*, and *Obſtructions* are form'd and introduc'd, is repreſented in the Examination of the State of the Mind.

The way to avoid them, is to ſearch the diſputed Opinion down to the Origin, from whence ſuch Notion or Thought cou'd be firſt produc'd; and to ſuffer no Concluſions but what are the natural and irreſiſtible Conceptions from the Things ſeen or done.

By which means the Paſſions, Prejudices, and Alterations will appear, and the Injuſtice of them be demonſtrated to common Reaſon and Senſe.

Though a Man may not be able to attain to all the Knowledge he deſires, yet may Diſputes be decided, and Errors be demonſtrated to be Errors to the general Judgment of Mankind.

A Perſon, inſtead of thus examining *Opinions* by his own Senſes and Judgment, or after his own Senſes and Judgment hath ſeen and determin'd them, may raiſe Diſtractions and Confuſions from what ſome ſuppos'd Venerable Author or Perſon hath ſaid contrary to ſuch evident Deciſion, but this neither alters the Caſe nor general Judgment; his wilful Obſtinacy, and reſiſting his own Judgment, may be as eaſily ſeen as if he ſhould perſiſt

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in affirming a Thing to be Black becauſe he hath formerly ſaid ſo, or heard ſome worthy Perſon affirming it, altho' the Thing is now brought to his Face, and ſhew'd to be White.

The Danger is here ſeen, as well as the Difference, betwixt affirming a Thing to be true, and believing it to be ſo.

Believing is an Aſſent of the Judgment, or Knowledge of a Thing being true on a due apprehending and judging it.

A Perſon that knows the divers Accounts and Deſcriptions from time to time of the City of *Conſtantinople*, that many Affairs of State and Commerce are tranſacted there, Men and Letters frequently paſſing, hath a Belief of there being ſuch a City.

Now this *Belief* is no Act of Faith, but a paſſive and irreſiſtible Conception, which 'tis not in his power to help, ariſing from thoſe evident Matters of Fact: But a Perſon who knows not thoſe Affairs, Tranſactions, and Matters of Fact, doth not *believe* there is any ſuch Place, nor can any Laws or Commands force him to believe it. But when he ſhall have duly inform'd himſelf of thoſe Facts and Evidences, and they have had Time to take place in his Mind, the *Belief*, or rather KNOWLEDGE of it, becomes impoſſible for him to avoid;

and then it wou'd be as barbarous, abſurd, and vain to command him not to believe it.

Truths adapted to common Belief muſt have Evidences adapted to common Reaſon and Senſe.

Otherwiſe they can neither be prov'd or known; which is the ſame thing as if they were not.

Here are Facts which excite an Affirmative Notion of the Truth, and render a Negative Falſity impoſſible, abſurd, and repugnant to common Reaſon.

As much as the Affirmative comes ſhort of general and irreſiſtible Evidence, or the Negative of a palpable Abſurdity, ſo many Degrees is it remov'd from a poſitive Certainty, and can only amount to a greater or leſſer Probability.

Therefore Faith contrary to common Senſe and Reaſon, or without a demonſtrable Aſſent of the Judgment to ſomething ſeen and apprehended, is downright Lying, or nothing at all but an unintelligible *Chimæra* in the Imaginations only of very wicked or very ignorant Perſons.

And Scepticiſm is the Production of Fear and Half-thinking, a Phantom conjur'd up by Cowardice and Idleneſs.

CHAP.

Chap. V.

HUman Judgment, as infallible as it is, is no more than an Effect of the ſame congruous Juſtice that is to be ſeen in all other parts of the Creation.

Man hath a Mind fitted for Knowledge, whoſe Buſineſs here is Improvement, and learning Experience.

The Judgment is a Faculty whereby it can chuſe what's proper for its purpoſe; and without this, Man would have been the only imperfect Animal in the Creation.

The Method of the Mind's perceiving and acting by the Senſes and Organs of this Body, is abſolutely neceſſary for the attaining the End for which it is here placed, and is no more than the ſame Harmony and Perfection there is in all other Things, whereby the Good and Happineſs of both depend on one-anothe: And the Union is ſo exquiſitely finiſh'd, that the Subſiſtence and Preſervation of the Body, and the Exerciſe and Improvement

ment of the Mind, are harmoniously complicated.

This *Judgment*, *Reason*, *Light of Nature*, *Conscience*, *Emanation of Light from Above*, *Ray of the Divinity*, *Image of GOD*, *Spirit of Truth*,

Is a Rule to regulate our Appetites and Passions, and thereby prevent Evils that arise from our selves.

And a Light, to discover what Evils or Errors may be impos'd upon us by others.

When a Man hath by Examination found himself in an Error, in following the Dictates of his Appetites and Passions, and persists in a Resolution to follow his Reason, he is then converted from Evil to Good.

CHAP. VI.

ALL Schemes of Religion aim at teaching something of the Immortality of the Soul, of rewarding or punishing it after this Life, as it shall have deserv'd here; but the Crimes for which, and the Methods by which, the Soul shall be so rewarded or pu-

puniſh'd, are ſo irrationally handled, that they are either the Subject of Abhorrence or Ridicule; and indeed, the Contempt that Men have for ſuch Impoſitions under the Name of *Religion*, is as juſt as 'tis common.

But there was a certain Venerable Perſon, who with divers other *good Doctrines* which he taught, had this rational one, That *all Sins ſhould be forgiven Men, but the Sin againſt the Holy Spirit.*

If this *Soul of Man* ſhould reſiſt by Raſhneſs of Will, the Inſtruction of theſe Rational Faculties, *Light of Nature*, or *Holy Spirit*, ſhou'd proceed to Actions without the Judgment, and thereby not improve it ſelf with the Opportunities and Power it hath for that purpoſe:

If GOD hath deſign'd it for ſome Improvements, in order to ſomething great and glorious hereafter (but being a free Agent, it hath refus'd it, and interrupted the Deſign) it would be unjuſt and unreaſonable to think it ſhou'd not be puniſh'd; neither wou'd it be for the Benefit of the Soul in the end; for the Deſign of Providence muſt be accompliſh'd, and it could never be fit for the Perfection aim'd at, was it not to be convinc'd of its Errors by ſome Puniſhments ſuitable to its Evil Actions.

This

This Doctrine or Revelation, That *all Sins ſhall be forgiven, but that againſt this Holy Spirit*, is ſo agreeable to the Methods of our Enquiry by Natural Reaſon and Juſtice, and ſuch a Help to us in purſuing it farther, that makes it worth a Man's while to ſearch into more of the Precept of this GREAT INSTRUCTOR.

Perhaps while we have been giving up our Reaſon, on pretence of giving place to *Religion*, we have been only betray'd to abandon the Defence of *Religion*, and in reality have been cheated out of all true *Reveal'd Religion*, as well as *Natural*.

CHAP. VII.

ALL Men who have the Knowledge of a Deity, of Providence, and of the Immortality of their Souls, will have a natural tendency to *Religion*; and there is a Neceſſity of having proper Times, Seaſons, and Methods for the Exerciſe thereof: The great Uſe of it, in reducing the irregular Tempers of Men, and in cementing Civil Society, (to go no farther than a Poli-

Political Conſideration) makes it an indiſpenſible Benefit.

Therefore they are wicked Perſons, Fools, and Enemies to *Mankind*, who are Enemies to *Practical Religion*.

But to ſo great a length have our Abuſers of it carried their Tyrannical Intentions, and to ſuch a height of Malicious Precipitation have their Paſſions hurried them, (a Conſequence natural to Perſons habitually wicked) that all *Practical Religion* is in great Danger of being overthrown, they having almoſt forgot to cover their Pretenſions with Sanctity, or ſo thinly done it, that the greater part of even the Vulgar, ſeeing the Artifice in the pretended Champions of it, are ready to oppoſe the whole Syſtem, inſomuch that there is little elſe to ſupport it but *Paſſion*, *Humour*, *Intereſt*, and *Clamour*, with ſcarce a Profeſſion of *Piety*.

How ſhort a time this *Paſſion*, *Humour*, and *Intereſt* may laſt, before ſome Accident or Alteration alters the ſame in the ſame Perſons, or ſtronger *Paſſions* and *Intereſt* may oppoſe them, and overthrow all, is worth the Conſideration of thoſe who have the Happineſs of Mankind under their Care.

To ſo momentary and precarious a Dependance have theſe ſhallow Politicians reduc'd

duc'd the preſent Conſtitution of *Practical Religion*, and their own political Intereſt and Exiſtence.

But we have liv'd in an happy Age and Country, to ſee a juſt and publick Cenſure paſs on this Wickedneſs.

And an Honourable Dignity and Diſtinction deſervedly conferr'd on the Perſon who oppoſes theſe dangerous Methods; who wiſely 'foreſeeing the certain Fall of a Superſtructure that's upheld by ſo weak and already-broken Support, having the Wiſdom to part with only what could no longer be retain'd; that is, the arbitrary *Impoſition* and *Tyranny*, is reducing the whole to *Rationality*, thereby eſtabliſhing *Practical Religion* on an invincible Foundation of *Truth* and *Reaſon*, and endeavouring to preſerve the whole ORDER.

Proving himſelf not only a wiſer and more ſagacious Perſon, but a greater Politician, and good Friend to Mankind, in preſerving to them ſo great and uſeful a Bleſſing and Benefit.

BOOK III.

CHAP. I.

THE ſureſt Way to prevent the Impoſitions of Others in deceitfully teaching us, is to learn the Art of teaching our ſelves, by conſidering what the Uſe of this Mind is, what Faculties we have to inſtruct us, and what to be inſtructed.

The whole Art of uſing, inſtructing, and regulating the Mind, is contain'd in JUSTICE, JUDGMENT, and EQUITY.

The Faculties of it are, APPREHENSION or Perception, JUDGMENT and WILL, or Reſolution.

The Apprehenſion muſt be reduc'd to Juſtice, and the Will to Equity, the Judgment is perfect, and regulates the whole.

When

When an Object offers it ſelf to the Apprehenſion, great Care muſt be taken that it be not repreſented in any undue *Medium*, but naked, and without Gloſs; that we do not ſo much as offer to determine whether it be *Good* or *Bad*, before we have *examin'd* and PERCEIV'D it, with a moſt exact JUSTICE, that no falſe Ideas or Images of Things be brought to the Judgment.

The chief Obſtacles to Juſtice in the apprehending of Things, are Bigotries and Prejudices;

Of which thoſe receiv'd from our Infancy are moſt difficult to be remov'd; but whoſoever would arrive at true Knowledge, muſt examine every former receiv'd Notion with as much Impartiality and Diffidence as if he never before knew it, tho' it ſeems never ſo plauſible.

If an Author, or Friend, whom we reſpect, or a Perſon of general Eſteem, preſent any thing to us, we are very apt to take it, without any Doubt, and thereby imperceptibly betray our ſelves into a moſt dangerous Bigotry.

For one pernicious Error may be bound up with a thouſand Truths; and, on the contrary, an uſeful Truth may be learn'd from an erroneous Perſon, or found among a thouſand Errors.

There

There are ſome natural and habitual Tendencies of the Will, and Conſtitutions of the Body, inclining us to Sympathies and Antipathies; but when an Object preſents, if we firſt examine our ſelves, and try if we have any Affection or Averſion, 'twill be no hard matter to conceive it, without the unjuſt addition of our Love or Hatred.

All the Errors in Opinion, relating to Arts and Sciences as well as to Religion and Morality, are owing to this careleſs Injuſtice in the firſt apprehending of Things.

Abundance of Things which appear myſterious, when they come to be ſtrictly examin'd, after this manner, are not found ſo; the Myſteries inſenſibly vaniſh.

And thoſe we can't come to a right Apprehenſion of, can never be determin'd to be *Good* or *Bad*, *Right* or *Wrong*, and can therefore bring nothing uſeful either Knowledge or Practice.

The familiar Example of holding a ſtrait Stick partly in Water, ought always to be in remembrance; for if it was not to be taken out of that undue *Medium*, the Judgment could never determine it to be any other than crooked, as it appears to the Eyes.

That which makes a Man compleatly Wiſe, is an Equality of Mind, an equitable Reſolution, not to ſwerve one Way or another, but to chuſe and refuſe what our Judgment dictates; an invincible Fortitude and Subjection of the Will.

Chap. II.

THIS *Juſtice*, *Judgment*, and *Equity* is the Sum and Perfection of all *Wiſdom*; *This* is that by which the World was produc'd.

All *Arts* and *Sciences*, *Morals*, *Politicks*, and *Religion*, have here their Original, and to *this* are they reduc'd and try'd.

All *Inventions* are from *hence*, and without *this* there can be no Improvement.

Rules are devis'd by the Wiſe for the Inſtruction of others, and the Explanation of their Meaning.

But there is ſomething in all Arts and Learning, which the *Rule* cannot utter: Whoever therefore finds not out this general Reaſon of Things, this Method of teaching himſelf, never arrives at any Perfection.

'Tis

'Tis not to ſtay criticiſing on ſecond-hand Principles, but ſearching out the Reaſon why they are ſo call'd.

This is that *inexpreſſible Somewhat* by which great Maſters in *Rhetorick*, *Poetry*, *Painting*, and *Muſick*, have ſuch happy Succeſs by excelling their *Rules*.

Even *Morality* is but a Scheme of *Politicks*, whereby a Man may be happy himſelf, and make thoſe ſo with whom he converſes.

Doing Good to the *Publick* brings Honour and Riches, and regulating a Man's Self brings Pleaſure and Health.

The myſterious *Cabala* is here brought to Light and explain'd, the *Magick* vaniſh'd, and the *Riddle* expounded.

This is the *Tree of Life* diveſted of its Allegory, and nothing keeps us from it but Appetites and Paſſions, which divert and dazzle the Eyes of the Underſtanding.

There are Appetites neceſſarily attending the Neceſſities of the Body, the irregular gratifying of which produce divers Evils.

But notwithſtanding theſe Appetites are naturally firſt in our Conſtitution, yet the Evils ariſing from them are the Effect of not uſing the *Judgment* and *Power* we alſo naturally have to regulate and correct 'em.

These Evils are destructive to the Improvement and Happiness of Mankind, which most Men do suffer themselves to fall into, more or less.

Whosoever therefore would enjoy the Pleasures of Life, and be *Happy* and *Wise*, must learn to *depart from Evil*.

Wisdom is the due apprehending and judging of all Things and Transactions, and persisting with an equitable *Resolution* in acting accordingly.

Virtue and *Morality* are therefore no other than a prudent Conduct, the Effect of the Instruction of this *Wisdom*; whereby a Man regulates the Use of his *Senses*, *Appetites*, and *Desires*; and acts and chuses what conduces most to his *Honour*, *Pleasure*, and *Prosperity*; which being equally and inseparably regarded, compleat his Happiness.

Therefore *Vice* is the Effect of *Ignorance*, and *Folly* the Origin of *Evil*.

Wisdom only teacheth to depart from it, and *Virtue* and *Goodness* have their Origin from *Wisdom*.

Chap. III.

After this rational manner did that Royal Philoſopher teach *Virtue*, and deſcribe *Wiſdom*, having *Length of Days in her right Hand, and in her left Riches and Honour*; whoſe *Ways are Ways of Pleaſantneſs, and all her Paths Peace.*

Nor hath the World ever produc'd a more flagrant Inſtance of the Injury *Knowledge*, *Virtue*, and *Religion* hath ſuffer'd (by impoſing arbitrary Sanctions) than in the Works of this venerable Author: For by this means the Curioſity is prevented, and an Examination hinder'd or anticipated, whereby a negligent and idle Aſſent is given, that it is *good*; but the Cauſe *why*, and the true Excellences thereof, are unknown and hid.

And this will be always the unavoidable Conſequence of thoſe arbitrary Impoſitions. For if all Things are not liable to *Errors* or *Failings*, yet is the Curioſity of Mankind ſo delicate, that it would not admit all to be *Good*, till he had ſeen what was *Good*, or diſcover'd the *Goodneſs* of the *Whole*.

There-

Therefore, where he is *terrified* out of an Examination (for fear of ſome *dreadful* Conſequence) he can't venture to do any thing more than implicitly admit it, with indolent Negligence, neither pleas'd nor diſpleas'd; leſt letting looſe his *uncontroulable* Curioſity, his Judgment may chance to diſapprove of ſomewhat, and lead him to thoſe ſuppos'd and threaten'd Miſeries.

Thus, becauſe an eſteem'd Oracle pronounc'd him the Wiſeſt Man, *People* do generally ſay ſo too, but without looking for a *Reaſon* for it; and prophane Perſons (with as ignorant and idle a Bigotry) make a Ridicule of the Whole, taking the Negligence of the Aſſertors (in giving no *Reaſon* for their Aſſertions) to be want of *real Matter* for *Proof*, and thereby juſtifie their Contempt.

This illuſtrious Prince was the greateſt that ever that *Nation* and *People* produc'd, the *Ornament* and *Wonder* of the Age in which he liv'd: He advanc'd his People as well as himſelf, and arriv'd to the higheſt pitch of *Honour*, *Pleaſure*, and *Riches*.

All this was the Effect of immenſurable Knowledge and Underſtanding, produc'd originally from *conſummate Wiſdom*; and out of *pure Love* to Mankind, he hath, in the

the Treatiſe here pointed at, diſcover'd what *this Wiſdom* was, and how attainable.

But *Men*, by a wonderful Infatuation, are led to look for *Myſteries*, and not ſee the moſt *plain* and *intelligible Truths* that can be expreſs'd, whereby the *great Benefit* deſign'd by the Author is loſt: Therefore the Injury, in this Caſe, is double.

And 'tis highly probable, that our *Royal Moraliſt* had the *Arbitrary Doctrines* of a certain Great and Venerable Author in his View, ſeeing he endeavours to excite Mankind to a right Method of Thinking and Judging what is proper for themſelves; and by his telling us, that this *Wiſdom* which he deciphers, explains, and teaches, is the *Tree of Life*, gives great ground to ſuſpect he directly levels at unravelling the whole Myſtery, as well as ſolving the Enigmatical Account of the *Fall of Man*, and reſtoring him to his Reaſon.

Chap. IV.

THerefore doth he demonſtrate the political Neceſſity of beginning to learn *Wiſdom*, by avoiding and departing from *Evil*.

For there is no poſſibility of being greatly *Wiſe*, without the Knowledge and Practice of Morality be firſt obtain'd.

No Uſe can be made of this Method of reſtoring Men to their Reaſon, or convincing them of their great Errors, but by a Perſon who hath his own Paſſions at command, and can look down on all Opinions that he ſees, or can be offer'd to him, with an equitable Regard, neither loving or hating them.

There is no Error but hath ſome Inconveniency or Evil attending it: The way is then, not to fall directly on the *Opinion*, but on the ill *Conſequence*; and, by ſuppoſing our ſelves in the ſame Miſtake, to inſinuate a mutual Endeavour with the Perſon to find ſome way of avoiding it: By this means the Caſe may be traced to the Original, and ſome *ſelf-evident* Propoſitions

tions introduc'd which will never be oppos'd; and when we find our *Antagoniſt* right in general Notions, to leave the Application to himſelf; always obſerving to come as near the very Caſe as poſſible, without touching on it expreſly, which would raiſe the Paſſion that ſupports it, or rather reduce the Man into his former State of Madneſs; as in other *Franticks*, who have lucid Intervals till the Cauſe of their Diſeaſe is mention'd.

Therefore *Pride* and *Vanity* have nothing to do here, and the Motive muſt be the real Benefit to the Perſon intended, tho' he ſhall aſcribe his Cure to his own better Thinking.

Thus, as *Error* is introduc'd, defended, and ſupported by diſorderly *Commotions*, *Diſtractions*, and *Paſſion*, ſo is *Truth* introduc'd by *Reaſon*, and allaying thoſe *Heats*, and the Cure perfected by reducing the *Mind* to *Tranquility* and *Peace*.

This whole Method of Logick or Argumentation is ſufficiently illuſtrated to the Induſtrious in the examination of *Reveal'd Religion*, and the Original of *Politicks* and *Government*.

The Obſtinate and Idle muſt remain in their Ignorance, or correct their Vices firſt.

So muſt thoſe proud Perſons who are ambitious of having the laſt Word in an Argument, and vainly oſtentatious of *conquering* or *confounding* their Antagoniſt, be incapable of this.

There's nothing hath contributed more to the debauching Human Underſtanding, than the Uſe of the Word BELIEVE. It is a Term without any certain Idea, and hath no intelligent Meaning particularly adapted to it, nor expreſſes any proper Conception or Operation of the Mind; is moſt extenſively and promiſcuouſly us'd, as may beſt ſerve to confound and conceal the true Determination of the Judgment.

When an Opinion is offer'd to a Man for his *Belief*, let him conſider what Evidence there is of its being POSSIBLE, PROBABLE, or CERTAIN, and ſo let him receive it, and ſpeak of it.

This every one will readily ſay is Knowledge; and ſurely, 'tis more proper, and ſignificant ſpeaking, to call it ſo, and ſay we *Know* (inſtead of ſaying we *Believe*) it to be more or leſs *probable*, *poſſible*, *certain* or *falſe*. So that, in this Caſe, here is no want of the Word *Believe*; and if a Man hath a Will to ſay *he believes* a Thing of which he hath no Knowledge at all; or if he would ſay *he believes* it to be true and cer-

certain, when his Knowledge of it amounts to no more than a bare Probability; this is a Reſolution to ſay ſomething contrary to Knowledge, and is therefore no other than what we properly call, in plain ſignificant Language, a LIE.

Not only all Degrees of Knowledge, from Poſſibility to poſitive Certainty, are alike ſaid to be believ'd, but alſo a bare Aſſent, without ſo much as any Knowledge, or ſcarce a Conſideration; alſo a pure Suppoſition, or even only the not reſiſting an authoritative Recommendation, are all call'd *Believing*. All that Logicians aim at, is not to excite Knowledge, but perſwade *Belief*; and thoſe who pretend to ſearch after Knowledge are content with *Believing*. What a Man *believes*, to be ſure he muſt defend and ſupport by all poſſible Force and Invention: And the more Learning hath been inculcated to him after this manner, the more Notions and Opinions he hath to ſupport, and is alſo better furniſh'd with Invention and Authority to defend; and conſequently, as he is more fit to confound other People's Underſtanding, ſo he is more liable to be confounded in his own, than a Man who hath nothing to rely on but vulgar Senſe, ſimple and unſophiſticated.

From hence 'tis no wonder that Diſcoveries more beneficial to Mankind have been taken from ſuppos'd ignorant Perſons, or found, as it were, by chance, whilſt the faſhionably learned and laborious Searchers after Knowledge, when the Exigencies of Mankind require their Aſſiſtance, ſit all amus'd, not being able to agree, any more than to underſtand themſelves, or one another; and nothing practical for General Good can be brought forth, till at length, with great Labour and Pains, ſomething is magiſterially dictated which Authority gives a Sanction to, but when it comes to be put in Practice, proves Vexatious to the World, and the Ridicule of Men of Senſe.

Nor can we expect much better Succeſs from Learning, till the pernicious *Verb*, BELIEVE, and its *Subſtantive*, are eras'd from all *Vocabularies*, and the very mention of 'em forbad the Schools.

If THIS fallacious, tyrannical Uſurper of the Throne of Human Judgment, was remov'd, there might be Hopes Men would arrive at the Knowledge and Uſe of their own plain Senſe and common Reaſon, and then there would be no difficulty in perſwading them, that above all Things, and in all Caſes, they ought to give it the principal Regard.

CHAP.

Chap. V.

THERE are certain Virtues, and alſo Vices and Follies, attach'd to ſome Men, and ſome Conſtitutions of Body, more than to others; as theſe have their natural Tendency, and produce Actions, ſo the Knowledge of 'em is neceſſary for the underſtanding the Capacities of Men, and 'forejudging what may be expected from them.

But that *Pride goes before Deſtruction*, is an experimental Obſervation of Matter of Fact, rather than a moral Inſtruction; for tho' *Pride* may bring Enemies and Hatred, and Evil doth often follow, as the natural Conſequence, yet is there alſo a certain Tumeſcence of Mind and haughty Diſpoſition ſuddenly ariſing, 'foreſhewing an Evil to come not naturally attach'd to it.

There is alſo a Concurrence together of Things remote from one another, and an unforeſeen Interception of the Actions of *Mankind* (with divers others, for the Induſtrious to look for) that are diſtinct

from Chance, which doth alſo often interfere, or from a Concatenation of Things link'd by neceſſary Conſequences one on another.

A judicious and curious Obſervation of theſe Things will lead a Man to the Sight of ſeveral Matters of Fact, which diſcover a certain ſecret interpoſing Power, which is commonly call'd *Providence*.

Tho' *Chance*, *Natural Conſequences*, and *Providence* are often confounded, and miſtaken one for another, yet are they diſtinguiſhable to the *Wiſe*; to whom the Story of *Socrates*'s *Dæmon* will not ſeem impoſſible, there being ſuchlike real Matters to be frequently obſerv'd, amongſt which is the ſtrange Diſpoſition of the Mind, in forming the Cure of divers Diſeaſes by the means of Charms; and, that if a Man hears another ſay, the Dreaming of ſuch a Thing ſhall 'foreſhew ſuch an Accident, if there is no Symbol or other Hieroglyphic already fix'd in the Mind, it ſhall be an unexpected and involuntary Character, to ſignifie the very ſame Thing for Time to come.

There are alſo ſome ſudden and ſtrong Emotions exciting Men to Actions they can ſee no Reaſon for, which appear afterwards to have been neceſſary for the avoiding an unknown (tho' imminent) Dan-

Danger; and ſometimes on other Accounts.

Theſe are all of one Nature, and are but few of many Things which ſhew the diſtinct Operations of the Mind, its Perception of Things, and Communication with other Beings like it ſelf, and its Endeavour to act and explain it ſelf by ſuch Things as our Senſes are converſant with.

But tho' the Mind doth perceive Things neceſſary to be done, yet can it not force the Will, any more than the Sight of a Friend in Diſtreſs can force a Man to help him; but the Impulſes are ſometimes ſo ſtrong, as to amount to little leſs than Compulſion.

Theſe Things *Fools* laugh at, and *Wiſe Men* therefore obſerve ſilently.

And whoſoever will not obſerve them after this manner, muſt be content with his Ignorance; for as we look not into Water to enquire after the Nature of Fire, ſo for Men to pretend to determine on the Certainty and Nature of Providence, and intelligent immaterial Beings, by the vulgar Notions of Matter and Senſe, is as ridiculouſly abſurd as the Effeminacy of applying every uncommon Appearance to a ſuperſtitious Uſe.

And 'tis the Neglect of these Observations, and Abuse of 'em, that makes the most *sublime* and *greatest Discoveries*, and *True Knowledge*, to be lost, or only the Names left, and slighted as *Airy Notions*, when they are really demonstrable, and founded on true and evident Matters of Fact.

And 'tis a Proficiency in this sort of *Knowledge* that makes a Man truly prudent, sagacious, 'foreknowing, politick, and religious, and is the Perfection of all practical *Wisdom*.

. But let the Curious follow these delightful Processes for themselves, which will sufficiently reward their Industry.

They are led past all *Obstructions* into a safe Track, and have a Ray of Light, which will shew them many seeming dark and inexplicable Mysteries.

The secret Meanders of Providence, its *Methods* and *Intentions*, are here to be traced, and a vast Discovery of the Certainty and Nature of Intellectual and Spiritual Beings.

By this Method may they examine into the *Works*, *Acquisitions*, and *Discoveries* of Men of all Ages of the World, but comparing, judging, and chusing by their own *Reason*.

The

The Temple of *Knowledge* is open'd, the Bars remov'd, and a Clue of Thread in their Hand, with which they may enter the Labyrinth, and ſearch all its ſecret Receſſes, without confounding or loſing themſelves.

All the Imperfections, Errors, Evils, and Degeneracy of Humanity, are owing to Violences and Artifices, by which we hinder, or ſuffer our *Reaſon* to be hinder'd in doing its Offices.

And the chief End, Duty, Happineſs, and higheſt Perfection that Man can arrive at, conſiſts, and is found, in a perfect Exerciſe of *Human Reaſon*.

Wiſdom is nothing elſe but an *Harmony* ariſing ſpom the right Uſe of our *Rational Faculties*.

And he is the Greateſt, Beſt, and Wiſeſt Man, and honours his Maker moſt, who uſeth to greateſt Advantage, the Excellency that diſtinguiſheth him from other Parts of the Creation.

SO imperceptibly do our Paſſions, Affections, and accidental Amuſements inſinuate themſelves, and interrupt our Apprehenſion *and* Judgment, *in the very* Courſe *of* Reaſoning, *that*

that there is great Need of ſtopping, and making a Curſory Review *of the* Laws of Reaſon, *and the Ways by which Errors and Diſorders are introduc'd, as often as any ſuch Caſe preſents.*

How much more is it neceſſary to underſtand the Frame of the Mind, and Art of Regulating it, before any excellent Proficiency *in Knowledge can be expected?*

Therefore tho' here ſhould be nothing wanting to enlighten the Mind, yet ought it to be of no greater length, than that the whole Deſign *may be comprehenſible at once, that it may be an* inceſſant *and* perpetual Light *to the Underſtanding, as often as any* Opinions *offer themſelves to Conſideration.*

For the better regulating our Conceptions, and the eaſier comprehending it, we may make a ſhort Recapitulation of the whole Work, *which will reduce theſe* RATIONAL PRINCIPLES *to certain* Stated Articles.

Ra-

Rational Principles;

BEING

A Recapitulation *of the whole* WORK.

1. REASON is the diſtinguiſhing Excellency, Dignity, and Beauty of Mankind.

2. There is no other Uſe of *Reaſon* than to judge of *Good* and *Bad*, *Juſtice* and *Injuſtice*, *Wiſdom* and *Folly*, and the like; that a Man may thereby attain *Knowledge* to diſtinguiſh *Truth* from *Error*, and to determine his Actions accordingly.

3. This *Reaſon* is known to us alſo by the Names of *Judgment*, *Light of Nature*, *Conſcience*, and *Common Senſe*; only varying its Name according to its different Uſes and Appearances, but is one and the ſame Thing.

4. The *Underſtanding* of Mankind conſiſts of *Apprehenſion*, otherwiſe call'd *Perception*; *Judgment* and *Will*, otherwiſe call'd *Reſolution*.

The

The *Errors* of *Human Underſtanding* are in the *Apprehenſion*, by a careleſs Injuſtice before they are brought to the *Judgment*; or in the *Will*, in inequitably chuſing and reſolving on Things without the *Judgment*, or contrary to it.

5. The *Judgment* of Man is an involuntary Faculty, acted upon by Objects, and determines without any Conſent of the *Will*; like a Mirrour, which gives a true Image of every Thing that can be brought to it.

And according to the Certainty or Uncertainty of any Matter, the *Judgment* determines it to be more or leſs doubtful, or true, or falſe.

6. If there is not ſufficient Certainty, or ſome Matter of Fact, to demonſtrate Something clearly to the *Judgment*, no Authority or Power whatſoever can force or perſwade it to determine whether it be Good or Bad: But if it is brought to View, a true Judgment is unavoidable.

7. *Reaſon* is not only a competent and infallible Judge, but the only Teſt to which all Authorities muſt ſubmit to be try'd, before we can know our ſelves, or prove to others, whether they are *Good* or *Bad*.

8. What-

8. Whatſoever is *Juſt*, *Wiſe*, *True*, and *Good*, hath no occaſion to fear a Tryal by *Reaſon*, or to appeal from it to *Authority*.

9. *Believing* is an Aſſent of the *Judgment*. Therefore, where the *Judgment* hath not determin'd or aſſented to ſomething ſeen by the *Apprehenſion*, pretending to believe is a bare Affirmation and Act of the *Will* only, which is no other than ignorant or wicked Lying.

10. A Voice in Thunder from the Clouds, nor any Prodigy or Miracle whatſoever, can alter or efface the Notions of *Juſtice* and *Wiſdom* in the Minds of Men; it may prevent the Uſe and Benefit of them, but cannot hinder their Judgments from determining whether what they ſee and know is *Juſt* and *Wiſe*, *True* and *Good*, tho' it may terrify them to Silence and Lying.

For the Notions of *Juſtice* and *Injuſtice*, *Wiſdom* and *Folly*, are after the ſame manner imprinted on the Mind, as the Notions of Colours; full as early, are equally unalterable, and as truly and properly apply'd.

11. *Religion* and *Knowledge* is not confin'd to any Perſons who have particular Faculties of perceiving, judging, and improving thereby: What is uſeful is for general Benefit and Inſtruction.

12. Things deſign'd for common *Belief*, muſt have Evidences fitted to common *Reaſon* and *Senſe*.

13. The Notions of *Juſtice* and *Wiſdom* are prior to the Notion of the *Being of GOD*.

The Knowledge of the *Being of GOD* is the Effect of natural Reaſoning on Things obvious to our Senſes, diſcovering the World and Things contain'd in it, to be the Production of ſome one *Juſt*, *Wiſe*, *Powerful*, and *Perfect Being* or *Agent*; and to this irreſiſtible Conception or Idea we give the Name of *GOD*.

14. The Notion of the *Immortality of the Soul* ariſes from obſerving the great Capacity the Mind of Man diſcovers, and ſtrives to exert in the Invention of Writing, Speaking, and Machines to act with, beyond the natural Limits of the Body; the Difference of the Operations of Men and Brutes, tho' their Organs and Means are the ſame, the

Efforts

Efforts of the Deaf and Dumb in Reaſoning, and explaining their Reaſonings, tho' they have a Senſe leſs than ſome Brutes, the Preſcience in Dreams, and other like inorganical Ways of Perception, and the Affinity of the common Ways of receiving Knowledge with thoſe uncommon, the Difference there is in the Effects produc'd by Language written or ſpoken, conveying Knowledge of Things, at a diſtance, without Contact to the Taught, but none to the Untaught, tho' their Senſes are equally perfect and alike exerted; the beginning Motion within our ſelves, without any external Touch to excite it, ſhewing thereby Perception *from Matter* and Action *to it* without touching it, diſcovering it ſelf thus to be a conſcious, perceiving, acting Spirit, or living Perſonality, operating without the Body, to Foreknowledge, when its Organs are at reſt and uſeleſs, capable of diſtinct Exiſtence from it, not liable to the Accidents thereof, or attackable by any Elementary Force, or tangible by any conceivable Matter: And tho' it may be puniſh'd by being depriv'd of greater Felicities, and forc'd into leſſer; yet (as the Beings likely to puniſh it are not periſhable by it) Annihilation can be no reaſonable Puniſhment: We have an evident Deficiency of a Senſe or Senſes to perceive what the Eſſence of it is, and its manner

ner of operating and exiſting at preſent, and in Futurity; but how it can be Mortal is not conceivable, from whence the Notion of this Mind's being an IMMORTAL SPIRIT becomes *Irreſiſtible*.

15. The Notion of a Providence is produc'd by obſerving real Matters of Fact, and Tranſactions of an interpoſing and preventing Power, which are not accounted for by common Conſequences, Chance, or any natural Cauſes.

16. All *Religion* which hinders the Uſe of *Reaſon*, deſtroys alſo the Uſe of the Notions of *Juſtice* and *Wiſdom* in the Mind of Man, which is the FOUNDATION on which the Knowledge of GOD and his Providence, and the *Immortality of the Soul*, is built; and is therefore a wicked Cheat, diſhonourable to GOD and *True Religion*, and injurious to *Mankind*.

17. *Religion* which teaches a farther Improvement of the RATIONAL *Faculties* of the Soul in this Life, and the Care of it afterward, a Method of worſhipping GOD ſuitable to the great Notions we have of his vaſt *Wiſdom* and *Power*, a recommending our ſelves to his Providence here and hereafter, is of indiſpenſible Benefit and Uſe

to

to Mankind; the native Diſpoſition of Self-preſervation, Admiration, and Curioſity, excite a natural Tendency towards it.

This is the Original of all *Religion*, the Foundation on which it is built, the End to which it tends, and the only Rule to which it can be reduc'd and try'd.

18. *Morality* is a Scheme of Politicks whereby a Man may be happy himſelf, and make thoſe ſo with whom he converſes: Doing Good to the Publick brings Honour and Riches; and regulating a Man's ſelf brings Pleaſure and Health.

'Tis a prudent Conduct by which a Man regulates the Uſe of his Senſes, Appetites, Paſſions, and Deſires; and acts and chuſes what conduces moſt to his Honour, Pleaſure, and Proſperity, which being equally and inſeparably regarded, compleat his Happineſs.

19. The Good and Benefit of Government is for the Perſons govern'd.

And this is the Original Law of Laws, and Authority of all Authorities, to which all Governours and Government, Laws, Politicks, and Cuſtoms, ſtand referr'd, and are thereby to be try'd.

20. No Laws or Politicks were perfect at the firſt Introduction of 'em, but are

alter'd and alterable as the Good and Benefit of the Nation doth more appear or require: And if there are any Laws, Politicks, or Cuſtoms to the Publick or Univerſal Detriment, 'tis juſt and neceſſary to alter them, and he is an *Enemy* or *Traytor* that hinders it.

21. Mankind is naturally endow'd with *Reaſon* ſufficient to provide Laws, and invent Methods of Government.

Government founded on the General Good is Self-defenſible, and has no need of any other Foundation or Defence but *Nature*, *Juſtice*, and *Reaſon*.

No Man can have any Pretence, Buſineſs or Pleaſure, in looking for any other Authority to govern by, or form Schemes of Government from, unleſs he hath ſomething to act or vindicate that is contrary to *Nature*, *Juſtice*, and *Reaſon*.

22. A Man may have a Right to the proper Eſtate and Poſſeſſions of his Predeceſſor, and the publick Peace and Benefit may make it neceſſary for him to ſucceed in the Government:

But there is no Native Right for one Man more than another, to aſſume Dominion over any People contrary to the general Conſent, Peace, and Benefit of thoſe People.

23. The

23. The whole Art of reducing Things to a Tryal by *Reaſon*, conſiſts in *Fortitude*.

That is, in an equitable Reſolution of the *Will* to chuſe and refuſe, according to the Dictates of the *Judgment*.

The *Judgment* is an infallible Light and Direction, whereby *Juſtice* may be done in apprehending, and *Equity* in chuſing.

And the *Sentence* which is form'd on ſuch a rational Tryal, is a Univerſal Propoſition, adapted to the general *Reaſon* of Mankind, a ſelf-evident or (at leaſt) an irreſiſtible Truth. Therefore,

When any Thing is offer'd, to which the Belief or Aſſent of the *Judgment* is requir'd; divide the Mind into *Apprehenſion*, *Judgment*, and *Will*: If what is ſeen in the *Apprehenſion* be contrary to what is requir'd, the *Judgment* doth ſo determine it to be contrary: And if there is Nothing ſeen by the *Apprehenſion*, then hath the *Judgment* made no Determination.

In either of theſe Caſes it may be boldly affirm'd and demonſtrated, that the Propoſer himſelf doth not believe it, nor hath any Faculty of his Mind had any thing to do with the Matter, but the Will only; and his pretended Faith is an idle airy

Conceit, an unintelligible *Chymæra* of the Phantaſie: For the SECRET of the Art lies in obſerving that the DETERMINATION OF THE JUDGMENT IS INVOLUNTARY, and therefore one Man may know what another believes. Or, more properly ſpeaking, we have no Meaning at all, when we ſay we *Believe*, but what cou'd more intelligibly be expreſs'd by ſaying, we *ſuppoſe*, we *aſſent to*, or we *know it* to be more or leſs *Poſſible*, *Probable*, or *Certain*.

And therefore, whoſoever would learn to Think and Speak juſtly, muſt learn to Think and Speak as if there were NO ſuch Words as BELIEVE and FAITH; and he that durſt not, or cannot conceive THIS, is incapacitated for forming a right Underſtanding; for HERE lies the Impediment, and THIS is the Grand MYSTERY of all the Confuſion and Error.

This Amuſement being remov'd, the Reaſoning not on Notions, but on Matters of Fact and Appearances of Senſe, and an honeſt Report made of what the Judgment dictates; Arguing is then from GENERAL PERCEPTION to a GENERAL DETERMINATION, and an Aſſent is as neceſſary and forcible as in Arithmetick, ariſes exactly after the ſame manner, is liable to no other Obſtruction nor Objection,

and

and as eaſily attain'd as the firſt Rules thereof.

Or, to render this Method of Reaſoning yet more familiar,

Conſider this Faculty of the *Mind* (moſt properly) call'd *Judgment*, by its other Names or Appearances, *viz. Reaſon*, *Light of Nature*, *Conſcience*, and *Common Senſe*; and it will eaſily appear that Mankind hath no other Faculties to underſtand any Matter by, or Ways of diſtinguiſhing one Thing from another: Nor is there any Knowledge, Determination, or Satisfaction againſt it, or without it; neither can the Terror of Authority, or Amuſement of Argument, wholly ſtifle it.

The Way then to diſcover Truth, is to conſider how Things appear to GENERAL Common Senſe; that is to ſay, to *Indifferent* Perſons, or to *Every* Perſon in the World, and to ſtand with Reſolution to the Reſult made on ſuch Conſideration.

To prove the Truth of your Work, and ſhew that you have apprehended juſtly, and reſolv'd equitably, according to the true Dictates of your Judgment, take this Sentence of Common Senſe, (that is to ſay, the Reſult which is made on a rational Examination of the Caſe) and reduce it into Form by writing it down, and 'twill be found a plain,

plain, irreſiſtible, and ſelf-evident Truth, fitted for the general Reaſon of Mankind; that is, ſuch as every Man's Common Senſe and Reaſon can't help acknowledging, any more than they can, that Two and Two make Four, or (which is as ſelf-evidently true, but requires a little more Inſpection) that Seventeen, Four, and Nineteen make Forty.

For there is no other Myſtery in forming a right Underſtanding, nor in attaining Knowledge and Wiſdom, but what is contain'd in this ſhort Sentence,

EXERT WITH DILIGENCE AND FORTITUDE THE COMMON USE OF COMMON SENSE.

AN

AN ANSWER TO A LETTER,

DESIRING

Some farther Illuſtration of the Method *of* Reaſoning *in the foregoing Treatiſe; alſo the particular Application of it to the preſent Diſpute on the* A—— C——d.

SIR,

I Am at length convinc'd, that it will be of Uſe to the further rendering this *Method* of *Reaſoning* uſeful, to illuſtrate it by deciding two or three well-known

known and familiar Controverſies; and ſhall therefore, without further *Prologue*, proceed to follow your Advice, and alſo endeavour to gratifie your Requeſt, by making the very Caſe you deſire one of the Examples; tho' I obſerve, you rather ſeem to wiſh to ſee it thus determin'd, than to adviſe me to it; but I ſhall nevertheleſs attempt it, and make no doubt of ſhewing, There is none of that Danger in it as is generally imagin'd.

The irreſiſtible Strength of this Art of *trying Things by Common Senſe*, conſiſts in reducing the diſputed Caſe to a ſelf-evident Propoſition, and thereby proving to your *Antagoniſt*, that he believes no otherwiſe of it than your ſelf, by letting him ſee that his own Judgment determines it ſo, if he will but regard it ſtedfaſtly, and not wander from it after airy Phantaſies, and be a Slave to Bigotry, and every arbitrary Impoſition.

Thus no Man ever believ'd *Tranſubſtantiation*; his Senſes ſhew him the Thing as it really is, and his Judgment determines it to be ſo: And the ſame Judgment alſo tells him, that whatſoever is ſaid to the contrary, is contrary to the Evidence of his Senſes, and the Deciſion of his Judgment: This is the Teſtimony of all his Senſes concern'd, *Seeing*, *Feeling*,

ing, and *Taſting*; and of all the Faculties of his Underſtanding concern'd, (*viz.*) *Apprehenſion* and *Judgment*: It hath therefore no Exiſtence at all in the *Mind* or *Underſtanding* of Man, but as it thus appears: Nor is there any other Argument neceſſary for confuting it, but by dividing the *Mind* or *Underſtanding* into *Apprehenſion* or *Perception*, *Judgment*, and *Will* or *Reſolution*; and then ſhewing, that this is an Act of his *Will* only, and ſo far from being the *Aſſent of his Judgment*, that it is the direct contrary. Now, by all the Faculties that it hath pleas'd GOD to beſtow on us, for the underſtanding of any Matter, and for the diſtinguiſhing of one Thing from another, this is as apparent a Falſity as to ſay the Sun is not riſen at mid-day. Therefore to ſay GOD hath commanded Men to affirm any ſuch thing, is to ſay, GOD hath commanded Men to lye: Which accuſing GOD of ſuch Wickedneſs and Folly is a moſt deteſtable Impiety and Prophaneneſs.

The Argument before us is here at a full end, and decided paſt all Objection, theſe laſt Arguments being ſelf-evident and irreſiſtible Truths.

And what generally, in ſuch Diſputes, follows after this, are Queſtions of another nature, and is controverting, Whether or no 'tis lawful to accuſe GOD of this Wickedneſs, Folly, and Injuſtice?

Or is diſputing, Whether Mankind have Senſes to diſcern *White* from *Black*, *Hard* from *Soft*; or Underſtanding to diſtinguiſh *Juſtice* from *Injuſtice*, and *Wiſdom* from *Folly*.

That is, in other Words, Whether a Man hath *Reaſon*, which diſtinguiſheth him from other Animals, or only differs in his Form, as all Species of Creatures do one from another: Or (if it is granted) he hath *Reaſon*, that is, his Diſtinction and Excellency above them, if he ſhall deprive himſelf of it, and degenerate to a Brute.

Now the Art of managing ſuch Caſes rightly, conſiſts in clearing theſe Arguments one of another, and taking care that they are not confounded and blended together, ſo as to perplex the Caſe, that you can ſcarce underſtand one another's Meaning: And this is not hard to be done; for your Antagoniſt will admit, that if he durſt rely on his *Senſes*, it appears to him as it doth

doth to you; but he depends on an *Authority* which he cannot doubt, on pain of Eternal Damnation, which tells him, He muſt not regard his Senſes. You are therefore here to acquieſce with him, for you are both agreed, that your *Senſes* and *Underſtandings* make the ſame Determination; and you are then to proceed to the Authority which he talks on, and other parts of the Argument. But if while one is talking of the Appearance of the Matter of Fact to Common Senſe, the other ſhall anſwer ſomething relating to the Attributes of GOD, or the Authority of Human Reaſon, the Time is ſpent in Miſunderſtandings.

You are therefore at the Beginning to obſerve, that the Matter of Fact is one diſtinct Argument, the Authority of Human Reaſon another, and the Queſtion, If GOD is *Juſt* and *Wiſe*, according to the general Notions of *Juſtice* and *Wiſdom*, is another; and to leave it to your Antagoniſt to chuſe any one of them, and to bring it to a Concluſion, before you proceed to either of the other: This is the Way, if you are the Defendant.

But if you design to convince any Person of his Error, who is bigotted in his Simplicity, the Way is, to establish the Authority of Human Reason by familiar self-evident Propositions, and to observe silently what Impression it makes on him, and so to proceed: For we are not to consider our Arguments according to our own Notions of their Force, and from thence to expect immediate Conviction, but to regard how they succeed, or are likely to succeed, with the Person design'd on: Overhastiness and Vehemency in arguing, is the Effect of Pride, blunts the Poignancy of the Argument, breaks its Force, and disappoints the End.

As in the Case before us (and such-like) is evident, where the Bigottry is almost invincible: If therefore a Person was to go to one of these, who imagines he believes *Transubstantiation*, and take up the Consecrated Bread before him, and say, This is nothing but Bread, you may see, taste, and feel it; therefore, if you say GOD commands you to believe it is not Bread, you most wickedly accuse GOD of Lying: This would only raise the Indignation of the Person against you, instead of making any

any Impreſſion on him, that (without ſo much as thinking at all on what you have ſaid) he rages at you as a prophane Perſon, ſetting up your own Senſe and Reaſon above Sacred Authority, and calling what he builds his Eternal Happineſs on in queſtion: So that tho' what you affirm is an immediate ſelf-evident Truth, yet you loſe the Benefit of your whole Argument, by an ill Method, and untimely uſing it.

You may ſee, by the Uſe I make of this Caſe, that I have no particular Antipathy, but deſign a general Example of it, and have choſen it only as a notorious Matter of Fact, to ſhew that there is no Folly, Slavery, and Brutality, ſo vile and ridiculous, but Men are expos'd to, when they have parted with their Reaſon; while the Tyrants that thus bridle and ſaddle them, ride them at their pleaſure, with Whips and Spurs to puniſh them for their Stupidity: For ſome of theſe Doctrines (which muſt not be rationally examin'd) have no other Intention, but to torment the Spirits of Men, and diſtract the Minds of the Ignorant; and are ſo far from tending to the

Reformation of Mankind, that they are againſt Morality.

It would be hard to prove the Benefit of the Doctrine of *Predeſtination*, or the Uſe of it in Religion or Manners; yet what Civil Tumults and Diſorders hath this occaſion'd, and been defended and oppos'd by publick Authorities! What Horrour and Diſtraction have ſome People liv'd and dy'd in with ruminating on it! What Volumes have been wrote, *for* and *againſt*, when any common thinking, rational Perſon, is able to decide it paſt all Controverſie, in an Hour's time! For, by only fairly ſtating the Caſe, it appears at one view.

A Man is decreed, before he is created, to be ſav'd, and be eternally Happy; therefore, after he is created, he hath a particular Grace given him, whereby he can't help leading ſuch a Life, nor accepting ſuch Terms, as ſhall qualifie him for this glorious Happineſs and Reward.

Another Perſon is decreed to be damn'd, and be eternally miſerable, and therefore he hath not that Grace given him, and ſo is incapable of accepting ſuch Terms, or acting, as ſhould qua-

qualifie him for Happineſs, and is therefore eternally puniſh'd and miſerable.

I am not going about, in a Series of Arguments, to confute this Opinion; any Man who thinks he hath the Power of judging, and the Knowledge of diſtinguiſhing *Goodneſs* from *Wickedneſs*, *Folly* from *Wiſdom*, and *Juſtice* from *Injuſtice*, ſees at one View the monſtrous Barbarity and Folly of ſuch a Caſe; and, tho' a Potter may do what he will with the Pots he makes, and break 'em to pieces when he hath done, yet this don't juſtifie his Wiſdom for ſo doing: And tho' it is in his power to make Pots, and break 'em, he may nevertheleſs be a Fool or a Madman; for any Perſon who ſees him act thus, will readily conclude him no better.

Now the Reaſon why all theſe Controverſies, and painful Enquiries, have been about ſo evident an Abſurdity, is, indeed, becauſe the real Thing it ſelf was never enquir'd into, nor controverted: The Diſpute hath been, Whether certain Perſons, of great and univerſal Credit for their Divine Inſpiration and Authority, have taught it; if their Words and Phraſes have been rightly underſtood; if two Perſons of

equal Reputation for their Sanctity, who wrote (ſome Hundreds of Years ago) directly one againſt another, can be made to mean one and the ſame Thing.

Theſe, and ſuchlike trifling Diſputes about *Words* and *Authorities*, have kept up the Argument ſo long: The Cauſe of all this is, Men do eaſily ſee by their *Natural Reaſon*, the Barbarity and Folly of the Thing, they have alſo a general Notion, that GOD is *Juſt* and *Wiſe*; but here is an Authority which they alſo allow to be indiſputably Sacred, that ſays GOD hath ſo acted; but inſtead of recurring to their Reaſon for Satisfaction, they fall to examine if this Authority is rightly underſtood and interpreted, and what reputed *Good Men* have ſaid of it; which, to ſum up the whole Caſe, is asking the Queſtion, If thoſe *Authorities*, *Good Men*, and *Interpreters*, have ſaid GOD is guilty of that monſtrous Barbarity and Folly: For if it was teſtified by a Voice from the Clouds, or a Prodigy, it would ſignifie nothing, for this *Judgment*, *Reaſon*, *Light of Nature*, *Conſcience*, and *Common Senſe*, will ſtill teſtifie the Barbarity and Folly of it.

There-

Therefore theſe Diſputes and Enquiries can't poſſibly produce any other Conſequence than forming the aforeſaid Queſtion, Whether theſe Authorities, Good Men, and Interpreters, have ſaid GOD is guilty of the Barbarity and Folly? For *Univerſal Reaſon*, which is all the Faculty we have of knowing and judging Things by, hath involuntarily and invincibly determin'd the Caſe it ſelf.

And if 'twas poſſible to prove this by any Miracle, Authority, or Teſtimony, that GOD hath acted after this manner, and thereby attempt to eſtabliſh it for an *Article* of *Religion*, it would prove, that GOD is fooliſh and barbarous: Which is rooting out of the Minds of Men all the Knowledge they have of his Attributes, and renders his Being *impoſſible* to be conceiv'd, or *believ'd*: Which is ſubverting the Foundation of Religion, and deſtroying it with all its Articles.

The Remedy, in this Caſe, is to recur to *Reaſon*, and conſider, that by *Reaſon* and *Light of Nature* we ſee that our ſelves, and every Thing elſe, are made by ſome juſt, wiſe, perfect, and powerful Agent; and by the ſame Wiſdom, Power,

Power, and Juſtice, are kept up to their deſign'd Uſes and Ends: And by the ſame *Reaſon* and *Light of Nature*, by which we ſee and know the Juſtice, Wiſdom, and Goodneſs of GOD, by the ſame *Reaſon* do we know, that the Caſe before us is barbarous and fooliſh; and, that therefore they are Lyars, wicked Perſons, and Diſhonourers of GOD, who affirm any ſuch thing. But if they will perſiſt in it, that ſomething which they call *God* hath ſo acted and commanded, by what they imagine invincible Proof, then 'tis plain we are miſtaken about the Word; they meaning one Thing or Perſon by the Word *God*, and we another: Like Perſons talking of two Men with differing Qualifications, who happen to have one and the ſame Name.

But as neither of us can know our GOD, or give any Account of him, but by his Actions, ſo we find Their *god* to have done Things inconſiſtent with one-another, and daily requires Things contrary to Juſtice and Wiſdom: And by the Appearances which they pretend to produce of him, he ſeems to be a heterogeneous ſort of material Being, very barbarous and tyrannical,

nical, but very inconſtant and mūtable: From whence we conclude, for all their Talk of his vaſt Power, that he is not laſting, but periſhable, and can do us but little Hurt or Good, ſo to be ſlighted accordingly with Contempt, leaving theſe his Champions to hammer out by themſelves ſome new Supporters to this Chimerical Image of a God; the Arguments on this Subject being like the following merry Interruption which two Gentlemen met withal, on their diſcourſing about the Heroes worthy to be plac'd at the Table of Fame.

2*d Gent.*] "No, Sir, I can't agree "to that, becauſe —— though there "may be a great deal in what you ſay "of the Paſſion, Barbarity, *&c.* but "when we conſider the vaſt Benefit we "reap from ſuch Perſons, that they "are the Preſervers and Defenders of "their Country; and what noble Sen-"timents inſpire theſe Heroes to ſuch "dangerous Actions; and, that even in "the heat of them a worthy Gallantry "and Honour is ſeen, and diſpers'd "to all meriting it around them, diſ-"covering the Man from the raging "Brute; and, as *Alexander* excell'd

"o-

" others in these glorious Virtues, can
" we with Justice then hinder *Alexander*
" from his Seat at the Table?

Interrupter] " Who, Sir! Is it *A-*
" *lexander* you are talking of all this
" while, and his Honour and Virtue?
" I believe he had not common Ho-
" nesty; nor I never read of any great
" Virtue belonging to him.

2*d Gent.*] " You look, Sir, some-
" thing like a Learned Person, but I
" doubt you have not read the best
" and truest Authors; for then you
" must have known his early Magnani-
" mity, even to the Delight and Ad-
" miration of his Father, and all o-
" thers; also his invincible Bravery in
" divers Battels and Sieges: But then
" his Honour and Honesty, how excel-
" lently did he shew it to *Darius*'s Fa-
" mily! And divers other Instances we
" have of his Virtue, Love of Learning
" and ——

Interrupt.] " Hold, Sir, pray go
" no further: As for his being a Sol-
" dier, I don't dispute it at all; it is
" very common for such Persons to go
" for

" for Soldiers: And for his Behaviour
" at thoſe Sieges, that may be alſo
" true: It might be in the Plunder of
" thoſe Places he got Money to ſet up
" his Trade of a *Copper-Smith*, for his
" Father and he might have been both
" *Tinkers*, as far as we know. But,
" Sir, you are groſly miſtaken to think
" I have not read the beſt of Authors;
" for I do aſſure you I have, and my
" Author tells me, you are alſo miſta-
" ken in the Virtue of your *Alexander*;
" for he expreſly bids the Brethren be-
" ware of him, and ſays, *Alexander*
" had done him much Wrong. And
" where are you now, Sir, with your
" great Reading, for my Author is no
" leſs than St. *Paul*, and I hope you
" won't pretend to diſpute what St. *Paul*
" ſays.

Exeunt two Gent. laughing] Ha, ha, ha!

I ſhall leave the principal Application, only remark, that when ſtupid *Ignorance* ſhall have *Impudence* enough to aſſume an Authority of determining Things excluſive of *Rational Arguments*, there's nothing ſo Serious or Sa-

Sacred, but may be render'd contemptible.

I come now to anſwer your ſecond Requeſt, which will make a third Example of this Method of Reaſoning.

But (by the way) I think you need not fear the Uſe of the Word *Judgment* being diſputed; for if you ask one of theſe Perſons, after he hath told you *this* is his Faith and firm Belief, Whether 'tis the Aſſent of his *Judgment*, on a right underſtanding of the Matter, he will tell you *Yes* certainly; and, perhaps, reſent it as an Affront to his Underſtanding and Honeſty, that you ſhould imagine he pretends to *believe* a Thing which his *Judgment* did not, on due Conſideration, tell him was true.

And indeed, if Mens Opinions are not the real, imaginary, or pretended Dictates of their Judgments, they are Hypocrites and Lyars confeſs'd.

Therefore a *Creed*, at the Introduction of it, is propos'd as an Inſtrument, containing ſome Articles to which not only the Aſſent and Belief of all Men is requir'd, but they are alſo requir'd not to ſay they believe it idly, and without Conſideration, but are to be careful

ful that, when they ſay *they believe*, they ſay ſo on deliberate Judgment and Underſtanding: And if there is any thing contain'd that's obſcure, there are Comments, Explanations, and Teachers, to inſtruct the Ignorant, and bring it to their Underſtanding, that they may judge and *believe* it.

By the Words, *Father*, *Son*, and *Holy Ghoſt*, we are to underſtand Three diſtinct Beings. The *Father* is a perfect diſtinct Being, the *Son* a perfect diſtinct Being, and the *Holy Ghoſt* a perfect diſtinct Being; therefore thoſe three Words are three Terms or Denominations we give to three diſtinct Ideas. When we uſe the Word *Father*, we conceive ſomething that is neither *Son* or *Holy Ghoſt*: By the Word *Son* we conceive ſomething that is neither *Father* or *Holy Ghoſt*: And by *Holy Ghoſt*, ſomething neither *Father* or *Son*: And theſe three Ideas are as diſtinct as the Ideas of a *Man*, a *Church*, and a *Ship*. When we expreſs the Word *Man*, we mean ſomething that is neither *Church* or *Ship*, &c.

Now, to conceive theſe Three diſtinct Ideas by Three diſtinct Names, to be One

One Idea by One diſtinct Name, and ſo believe theſe Three Perſons to be only One, is one of the moſt nice Inventions that ever the ſubtleſt Virtuoſo contriv'd to puzzle the Wit of Man with, and is juſt as eaſie to do, as it is to conceive and believe, That one Perſon is deriv'd from another, and begotten, and the other Perſon deriv'd from thoſe two, and yet be both of 'em Eternal, and without Beginning.

But, to leave theſe Abſurdities, without troubling our ſelves to recite any more of 'em:

'Tis demonſtrable, no Man in the World did ever yet *believe* them, if *Believing* is an Aſſent of the Judgment: For here is nothing which Human Apprehenſion did ever comprehend or perceive; and the *Judgment* hath conſequently nothing to act on, nor any thing to determine concerning the Goodneſs or Badneſs, Truth or Falſhood of. It is true, here is a Propoſition offer'd, but as it contains nothing that can be underſtood, *Judgment* can form no Determination of the Matter contain'd: But of the Propoſition in general there is an involuntary Sentence produc'd by the UNIVERSAL *Judgment* of Mankind, That

That it is an unintelligible piece of Nonſenſe. And, as ſtrange as this may appear to ſome, or (perhaps) ludicrous to others, 'tis a ſerious and ſelf-irreſiſtible Truth; and the Perſons who conceit they believe ſo, will be found (on a little Examination) to have amus'd themſelves with an Imagination of the Phantaſie, their pretended *Belief* being no other than an Act of their Will only, an Habit of affirming they know not what.

Nevertheleſs, I can't ſee but this Doctrine might have been taught and receiv'd long enough, if it had not been for the Author of this ſevere Penalty, which he ſo poſitively and dreadfully pronounc'd, that he forc'd Men to a neceſſary Curioſity of examining what it was they were to *believe* on peril of eternal Miſery; and all the Satisfaction they can arrive to, is, that there are certain Words and Letters jumbled together, which, when pronounc'd, make a Sound, but without any Meaning, that is in the compaſs of Human Underſtanding to find out or explain.

And if ſome few Perſons ſhould obſtinately ſay they do *apprehend* and *be-*

lieve this, it ſignifies nothing; for it's apparent it is not fitted to common Underſtanding; and 'tis therefore trifling and fooliſh to offer it.

And, to command a Man's *Judgment* to aſſent to a Thing which is contrary to the involuntary Determination and Teſtimony of his *Judgment*, is great Folly, Barbarity, and Injuſtice, beſides the Impiety of accuſing GOD of this Injuſtice.

Now, all the Words that can be multiply'd about the Inſpiration of this Author, if the Proof of his Divinity was never ſo plain, and an Hundred Miracles were wrought in our ſight to ſhew it, it amounts to nothing at all; for the Caſe ſtands impoſſible to be aſſented to by the *Judgment*; and the Injuſtice and Folly of commanding a Man to aſſent to a Thing which is not adapted to his Underſtanding and Judgment, ſtands conſtantly condemn'd by general *Reaſon*, common *Senſe*, and *Conſcience*, and by all the Faculties we have of underſtanding any Matter, or diſtinguiſhing one Thing from another: Nor can the Miracles or Threatnings have any other Effect, than to terrifie a Man to Silence or Lying, and ſay againſt his Con-

Conſcience, *He believes what he does not.* And tho' he ſhould, for many Years, bring himſelf to an Habit of affirming it, yet is he no other than in a ſtate of Scepticiſm; for this *Judgment*, *Reaſon*, *Conſcience*, and *Common Senſe*, will be frequently reſiſting his Obſtinacy, and telling the Truth.

Now here hath been four times more ſaid about this Matter than is neceſſary for the Confutation, but 'tis ſuppos'd this Method of Reaſoning is not ſufficiently known and eſtabliſh'd; if 'twere, how ſhort and eaſie would be the Deciſion of many great Controverſies! as appears by the Example of this before us, about which ſo many fine Speeches have been made, and Volumes wrote, which ſtands in theſe few following Lines fully examin'd and decided in a Tryal by *Common Senſe*.

That three Things by three diſtinct Names are one Thing by one diſtinct Name, without confounding the Three, or dividing the One; and, That two Perſons, that are one of them deriv'd and begotten from another, and the other that is deriv'd from thoſe two, are ſelf-exiſtent Beings, without Beginning, and Eternal, are unintelligible

pieces of *Nonſenſe* and *Falſhood*, which no Man ever did or can *believe*, his Judgment not being able to aſſent to it, but involuntarily determines the contrary.

To offer theſe to a Man for the Aſſent of his *Judgment*, is either Folly or Wickedneſs, and an Affront to *Human Underſtanding*.

To command the *Belief* thereof, with Puniſhment on the failure, is a moſt barbarous piece of Injuſtice, beſides forcing Men to lye.

To ſay, GOD hath ſo commanded or acted, is deteſtable Impiety and Prophaneneſs.

But to apply this to our Purpoſe, which is no other than teaching a juſt Method of *Reaſoning*, this is a notable Example of a dangerous unforeſeen Way, by which Error is introduc'd by over-haſtily reſolving on the Negative, becauſe the Affirmative is not prov'd: For I make no doubt but many Perſons, who read this, will imagine the Doctrine of the Trinity condemn'd; whereas 'tis only a proud wicked Perſon, who after ſo groſs and vile a manner pretended to deſcribe the Deity, and abuſe it alſo, by making GOD fa-

father his wicked and barbarous Method of enforcing it.

But, to make an end of this Cenſure, the ſhorteſt Way, is to look on this as only a confus'd unintelligible Deſcription of a *Heterogeneous Monſter* of their own making, to which they are obſtinately bent to give the Appellation of *God*, and to which they have apply'd Attributes ſuitable to the Drudgery they imploy him in: But this concerns not the Great and Wiſe *Author of the Univerſe*, and therefore we have no further to ſay to them.

'Tis true, our GOD muſt be only One, indiviſible and ſelf-exiſtent; but nevertheleſs, Who can dare to aſſert the Negative, and ſay there may not be a Triplicity or Trinity after ſome manner or another? For if a Perſon was to form ſuch an Inſtrument as before, and tell Mankind, If they do not believe, that it is impoſſible for there to be any ſuch thing as a Trinity or Triplicity, after any manner, in the Deity; This wou'd be as unjuſt and barbarous as the other, and both equally condemn'd by *Common Senſe*.

But, to croſs the Expectations of prophane Perſons, I can't help telling them, that tho' it is impoſſible for Men to conceive it after ſo wretched a manner as the before-meant Author wou'd impoſe on us, yet the Notion of the Trinity, conſider'd as a pleaſing divine Speculation, is not ſo abſurd as they imagine, and is older than Chriſtianity; and to Perſons who underſtand Muſical Proportions and Sounds, is not inconceivable; as in the *Diateſſaron*, which conſider'd Geometrically, compounded of three only Spaces or Diſtances, and as the compleat Original of all Muſical Compoſitions, will afford a pleaſing Amuſement, and excite an Idea very agreeable to the Subject in hand.

I have not now Time, nor Room, to ſhew the Proceſs, but wou'd be glad to ſee Perſons who ought to make ſuch Divine Speculations their Buſineſs, conſult that great Philoſopher.

The Primitive Chriſtians, 'tis well known, were not aſham'd to own they receiv'd and practis'd many things from the *Pythagoreans*: But tho' I recommend this way of conceiving of the Deity to thoſe who are capable of it, yet wou'd it

it be the greateſt Folly and Injuſtice to expect or command others, who are not capable of this, to conceive it ſo.

It would be of Advantage to us to form the Imagination of a Scale like this following, whereby we might meaſure the Degrees of *Certainty* and *Uncertainty*, as the Evidence of them occurr to our Apprehenſion:

Certain,
Probable
Indeterminable,
Poſſible,
Impoſſible *or* Falſe.

What is conceivable is poſſible; then the moſt Prophane will admit, that we have had ſome Teſtimonies of a threefold Appearance of the Deity, from ſuch Hands as are worth our Conſideration. To this add, That it hath been taught Philoſophically, and it will riſe above the middle of our Scale, almoſt to *Probability*; however, to make the greateſt Allowance that any Rational Examiner can deſire, it muſt be left in

in the middle, *Indeterminable*, till further Enquiry.

But ſurely we ſhould be juſtly condemn'd, if becauſe we find we have been abus'd by thoſe who have alſo betray'd what they pretend to defend, that therefore we will take the contrary Extream, and fly in the Face of all the *Practis'd Religion* and *Laws* of our Country, and aſſert the Negative with the ſame wicked *Preſumption* and *Partiality*.

I have thus endeavour'd to gratifie you in this Point, and have taken the ſame uncontrouſable Liberty (as you are pleas'd to call it) as before; and I ſhould here finiſh, but can't help taking Notice, that after all this Licentious Examination, we are, in reſpect to Religion, (abſtracted from the evident *Innovations* and *Uſurpations* of wicked Men) nothing ſhort of where we were before we ſet out.

For if, in ſome Caſes of Religion, there ſhould not be ſufficient Evidences to excite a perfect Idea of the Matter deſir'd, yet if a Duty was inferr'd from thence which was apparently for the Benefit of our Souls or Bodies here or hereafter, for the Good of Mankind in Society,

Society, and agreeable to the Honour and Attributes of GOD, we ſhould have nothing to diſturb our Peace, nor to excite too Curious an Examination.

That the Religion of our Country is reducible to this, and therefore defenſible by Reaſon, is an evident Fact; as appears by the Succeſs of ſome worthy Perſons, who ſeparate the *Irrationalities* and *Uſurpations*, and yet preſerve it entire.

And happy is it for us that it is ſo, for Authoritative Religion (if we had any occaſion for it) is by impolitick Management quite ruin'd; the very Vulgar ſee the Cheat, and among Men of Senſe, Curioſity, and Education, not one in fifty but contemn it, and look upon the *Defenders of it as ignorant deſpicable Fools, or pernicious Knaves.*

And as for thoſe who pretend to interrupt the Political Conſtitution of our State by their Authoritative Religion, which is not to be queſtion'd by Reaſon, they are guilty of the moſt daring Impudence that ever was offer'd to Mankind; 'tis High-Treaſon, in the Effects of it, againſt the Civil Government, betraying the Liberties of a happy free Peo-

ple, deſtroying their Peace, and inſulting their Common Senſe.

But ſince this ſetting up of Authority againſt Reaſon is now generally diſcover'd to be detrimental to our Religion, and deſtructive to the State, it is Matter of ſome Admiration, What can be meant by defending it!

To pretend to teach Mankind by Authority, and not allow him Reaſon, is as fruitleſs as it's idle and ridiculous to attempt it; for there is no other Faculty to underſtand a Matter by, or way of diſtinguiſhing one Thing from another; and the Notions of *Juſtice* and *Injuſtice*, *Wiſdom* and *Folly*, are after the ſame manner imprinted in the Mind, and full as early as the Notions of Colours are equally unalterable, and may be as truly and properly apply'd; tho' Men may (if they pleaſe) take a ſtain'd Glaſs to ſee an Object with, inſtead of looking on it with their naked Eye; or, in the room of examining it themſelves, turn their Backs, and deſire another to tell 'em what Colour it is.

But here is ſtill no Uſe for this Arbitrary Impoſition on our Reaſon in *Great Britain*, and therefore we ſhall conſider the Pretenders to it as a ſett of wicked Perſons,

Perſons, who have fram'd a *Machiavellian Syſtem of Politicks* (which they are pleas'd to call *Religion*) to gain themſelves an abſolute Dominion; and their God, which gives the amus'd Sanction, is an Idol of their own Invention, to patronize all the Villanies and Impoſtures they think fit to embarraſs the World with. But a Confuſion is rais'd in Men's Minds by the Equivocal Uſe of the Word *God*, it being the ſame Denomination Men apply to the True Deity.

There is therefore an abſolute Neceſſity of thus Thinking of thoſe ſorts of Perſons, in order to make a Separation, and excite in our Minds a clear and diſtinct Notion of *True Religion* from *Falſe*, and of the *True GOD* from wicked Mens Deſcription of a God.

When we have thus done, we ſhall ſoon ſee that the Object of *True Religion*, and all Rational Mens Speculations, is an Eternal, Unchangeable, Omnipotent Being, infinitely Good, Juſt, and Wiſe, according to the general Notion of thoſe Attributes imprinted on Mens Minds: Therefore when any Perſon talks to us of GOD and *Religion*, contrary to the common Notions of theſe Attributes, we have no more to do, but to con-

clude, that they mean the aforeſaid Idol.

As for the Information you gave me of a Deſign of publiſhing the *Recapitulation* of the 'foregoing Treatiſe by it ſelf, without my Leave, I care not much, eſpecially ſince I have had Time to correct it, and it hath paſs'd your Approbation, and ſome others, whom I juſtly value. Let them call it *The Creed of a Free-Thinker*, or what they pleaſe, I find we agree in our Opinions, That it can't be too publick to let the World ſee that the Clamours againſt *Rationaliſts* and *Free-Thinkers* is exactly the ſame with the *Athenians* againſt *Socrates*; the *Atheiſt* and *Sceptick* vaniſhes before *Reaſon*, and retort upon themſelves.

And indeed the Accuſation of the extraordinary Irreligion of the preſent Age ſeems to be not very juſt, nor to have any Foundation, but that Men will not be ſo eaſily bubbled out of their own *Common Senſe* into other Mens *ridiculous Notions of Religion.*

There has been as many Additions to the Demonſtration of the Being of a GOD, and his Providence, and the Immortality of the Soul, and as many old ones reviv'd, as in any Age; and the Subjects

Subjects of Divinity and Morality, rationally handled, are the most pleasing Entertainments for the generality of Men of Sense; witness some Tragedies and Treatises of that nature. The Author of the *Spectator* also remark'd, That he sold more of his Speculations on those Subjects, than of the more light and diverting.

And even from the Pulpit (as prophane as they think the Age) if the Discourse is to Men as rational Creatures, and the Person's Life and Manners agreeable to the Worthiness of his Office, he is deservedly follow'd, admir'd, and distinguishably valued.

For *Eloquence*, *Reason*, and *Divinity* conjoyn'd, is as harmonious a Delight to a rational Man, as a good Composition of Musick (well perform'd) is to a Musical Ear.

A

SUPPLEMENT,

By Way of

ANSWER

TO

All the OBJECTIONS which have been made to the 'fore-going Treatiſe.

CHAP. I.

'THE following are the Heads of ſome Things ſent by a Society, under the Title of *Objections*; and as they contain all that hath at any time

time been ſaid againſt the preceding Work, they have prov'd of uſe to the Author, in ſhewing what Amuſements have been, or may be rais'd, to obſtruct his End. In order to purſue which to the utmoſt of his Power, and remove every Hinderance, the Purport of them will be here conſider'd.

Object. *The Treatiſe is not Philoſophical enough, as in* Page 4, *the Word* Faculties *is improperly us'd, and contrary to the ſame in* Page 36.

Page 64. *No falſe Ideas. Falſe Ideas is an unphiloſophical Expreſſion; ſo is Two and Two makes Four. Two and Two are equal to Four, is more proper,* &c. *and there are ſeveral other like Inaccuracies.*

Anſw. Whether the Criticiſm on the Word *Faculty* is juſt, is a Matter of ſmall moment; it is plain, that what is there meant is, That Man hath no Power to perceive Things which can't be brought to his Senſes; and if I ſaw Reaſon to correct, I ſhould differ from them, and correct in the laſt place, for it wou'd be difficult to ſubſtitute another Word in the firſt place, for a Power accom-

panied with Uſage and Cuſtom, except the doggrel Word *Knack*.

Two and *Two* makes *Four*, renders the Parallel more agreeable; for our ſelf-evident Concluſions muſt not only be *equal* to the ſeveral premis'd Circumſtances, and alſo be true, but it muſt be *compos'd* of them, and be the Sum and Amount of them; for it may be *equal* to the premis'd Circumſtances, and alſo true, but not *ſelf-evident*, unleſs it be an *Arithmetical* FACIT of the whole: For we mean not here to juggle (as they accuſe us) or to eſcape by Ambiguity, but a ſelf-evident Concluſion muſt be fully and clearly what is expreſs'd by *Two* and *Two* making *Four*, or by *Seventeen*, *Four*, and *Nineteen* making *Forty*: That is, to any Perſon capable of underſtanding the Terms contain'd in the Concluſion, and can conſider and compare them, after the manner of proving how *Seventeen*, *Four*, and *Nineteen* make *Forty*, the Concluſion muſt ſo ſelf-evidently appear, without referring to any Thing out of the ſaid Concluſion.

Beſides, *Four* is the Facit, or Amount, of *Two* and *Two*, or *One* and *Three*, and is *not*, but by ſuppoſing other Numbers of which

which it is made; as a Square is not properly ſaid to be *equal* to four Sides, but is *made* of, or conſiſts of four Sides.

There is a Matter of great Conſequence depends on the Expreſſion *falſe Ideas*; of which more in its proper place.

As to the general Charge, of the Treatiſe not being *Philoſophical* enough, if I rightly underſtand them, it is what was the principal Intention of the Author in forming it; for he took more Pains, and abſented himſelf longer from reading any Thing that might contribute towards it, or render it like whatſoever hath been before, than he thinks proper here to mention, with a purpos'd Reſolution to ſtrike out from *Nature*, and the *common Uſe of Common Senſe*, ſome Principles, or Beginnings, as a Foundation, to go on towards the attaining *Philoſophical* Knowledge. Alſo, to ſee if it was not practicable to fix an UNIVERSAL *Manner of Reaſoning*, and attaining Truth by the ſimple Application of *common Senſe*, as 'tis evident there is in moſt ordinary Caſes.

And

And if here is no Offence in Grammar, nor Abuſe of Words, but a plain and intelligible Application of a tolerable Propriety of Language to what is deſign'd to be related, it is enough, and the utmoſt Aim of the Author.

As to the Particularities by which is ſuppos'd to be meant the proper *Manner* of the Author, as he differs from another, this muſt be taken juſt as it is.

Here is to be expected not much more than a Man of ſome Curioſity, in little better than the State of Nature, might be forming to himſelf, on an induſtrious Obſervation from what he ſees, and not from any thing he hath been taught.

Obj. Page 12. *The Inference of the Probability of a Star's being inhabited, is too great a Concluſion from what hath been before ſaid.*

Anſw. This is a moſt trifling Objection (tho' urg'd by them with great Vehemency, as an Example of the Author's Inſufficiency in Reaſoning) for 'tis evident, there is not there meant a ſtrict Manner of Reaſoning, but deſign'd

ſign'd as an Example of the very contrary, and a curſory and popular way of Thinking.

But as they have brought this to Mind, and it is very proper to illuſtrate ſomething to our Purpoſe, it is hereafter conſider'd and apply'd, but with very little regard to the Objection.

Obj. Page 48. *We can't help conceiving it to be a Spirit capable of exiſting by it ſelf, without the Body, and not liable to the Accidents thereof.*

Alſo, Article 14. *And ſome further Evidences excite an irreſiſtible Conception of the Soul's Immortality. This is a Concluſion greater than the premis'd Circumſtances admit of.*

Anſw. This Objection is partly for want of conſidering the import of the Word *Spirit*; and alſo, want of obſerving, that a *Conception* is not a *Concluſion*, but even oppos'd to it, and is ſuppoſing the Thing yet ruminating in the Mind, before a fix'd Reſolution to *a Concluſion*. But this is chiefly (as they have afterwards declar'd) in purſuance of (what I conceive) a Miſtake of their own,

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own, that there is nothing to ground the Notion of the Soul's Immortality on but Revelation.

Obj. Page 34. *On which Apprehenſion, Judgment, and Reſolution* act.

Page ib. *Knowledge is therefore produc'd by the Mind, in the* Actions *of Apprehenſion, Judgment, and Reſolution. Theſe Words,* Act *and* Action, *in relation to the Judgment, are improper, and contrary to ſome other Places in the Treatiſe.*

Anſw. The laſt of theſe is now corrected; but by the Manner of their treating this, ſeems as if they did not conſider, that the Diviſion of the Mind (or rather Underſtanding) is not real, any more than that of the Sphere into Meridians and Parallels, but only for the more ready conceiving it: For it is the *whole* Mind which apprehends, the *whole* Mind which judges, and the *whole* Mind reſolves.

Obj. Article 4, of the Recapitulation. *Errors of Human Underſtanding are in the Apprehenſion. This is oppoſite to* Page 34. *All Errors are in the Will.*

Anſw.

Anſw. This is indeed an Exception ſeemingly juſt enough, but by the whole Tenor of the Treatiſe it may be ſeen to be a Miſtake that eſcap'd correcting; for 'tis plain 'twas deſign'd to recapitulate *Chap.* 1, *lib.* 3. as it now doth.

Obj. *That the* 13, 14, *and* 15 *Articles are not ſelf-evident.*

Anſw. Theſe have not yet been call'd ſo; however, ſince they are not the only Perſons who have made this Obſervation, we find it is expected they ſhould be ſelf-evident.

But the 13th is already ſelf-evident, notwithſtanding what they ſay of *Epicurus*'s affirming the contrary; for if *Epicurus* had any Knowledge of a GOD at all, he receiv'd it by this means, and the whole Article is ſelf-evident to any Perſon capable of underſtanding the Terms, and comparing them. And all that *Epicurus* hath ſaid is not only falſe, but ſome of it immediate ſelf-evident Lyes.

The 14th and 15th were not indeed ſelf-evident, tho' they were irreſiſtible, but are now ſo made.

And

And here 'tis neceſſary to inform the Readers, That the Reaſon why the Recapitulation hath receiv'd ſome Additions, is, (to confeſs freely) it hath prov'd of greater Moment and Uſe than the Author was at firſt aware of; and therefore he hath found it neceſſary to digeſt it very carefully into a proper Order, that it might thereby be a perfect *Syſtem* in it ſelf, as well as Recapitulation of the whole Work. Then the Diſſertation on the Word *Believe*, was (by Advice) left out in the two former Impreſſions, tho' contrary to the Author's Inclination (as may be eaſily ſeen) and this ſomewhat confin'd him, that he cou'd not deliver himſelf with Freedom.

If theſe Objectors, or any other, cannot ſee an Uſe will be made of this Recapitulation, whether the Author will or no; nor a great and good Intention in the forming it, which could not, nor ought not, to be perfected at once: Or if they think theſe Additions are a Confeſſion of a Deficiency at the firſt, and are not ſatisfied with the Acknowledgment, and ſupplying this Deficiency, they are welcome to call it a *Singularity*, or put what other Cenſure they pleaſe upon

upon it. There is an END in view which ſuch Trifles ſhall not obſtruct.

We have, beſides the 'foregoing Objections, a long Harangue againſt what hath been ſaid here, and in a private Letter to them on Miracle Teſtimony: Alſo againſt the *Infallibility* of the *Judgment*, and on ſelf-evident *Concluſions*; but not without ſome of that ill Nature which commonly accompanies Bigotry.

But our Buſineſs is here to inſtruct Mankind how to avoid the ill Conveniencies attending ſuch falſe underſtanding of Things; and not ſo ſoon as ſome of theſe evil Conſequences come to be practis'd upon us, be provok'd to a Diverſion from the main End, but rather ſuppoſe ſome Deficiency in the Illuſtration, as not being clearly enough explain'd to their Capacities, or adapted to take Men in their differing Ways of Thinking. But it is not, I hope, expected that thoſe are to be taken, and argued, as Objections, they being rather Criticiſms, and very little Argument in them, but like ſome School-boys pretending to Logick, perſwading ignorant People they can't count Four in a progreſſive manner; for, ſay they, One and Two is

Three,

Three, and Three is Six, and Four is Ten.

I might with as great Eaſe as themſelves, ſet forth in an elegant and well-enough connected Oration, and argue to a Dilemma, That to truſt to *Common Senſe* and *Carnal Reaſon* is very fooliſh, and inſufficient in moſt Caſes; and the Teſtimony of whole Nations, who would ſacrifice themſelves and one another, and their whole Eſtates, in defending Things directly oppoſite to it, might be brought as Evidence, and even to render it ridiculous to attempt it.

A Chain of *Ideas* might be introduc'd, the Sophiſtry of which wou'd not eaſily be diſcover'd, to prove, That neither this Author, nor any Man out of the Church, for all the *Infallible Judgment*, can know, or ſpeak any *Truth* at all; for *Truth* is not to be found any where but there.

Alſo, That many Articles in the Multiplication Table, or moſt Propoſitions in *Euclid*, might be repreſented as Uncertain. It might by Algebra and Decimal Arithmetick, deceitfully apply'd, be ſhewn, that *Seventeen*, *Four*, and *Nineteen* cannot be depended on to make *Forty*; and this, to the confounding

founding four Fifths of the People of *Great Britain* paſt their anſwering; and, to compleat the Scene, a Miracle might be introduc'd, to the Deception of all the Perſons preſent, to confirm the whole.

But we hope to find a better Uſe for Speech, and the *Rational Faculties* of Mankind, than thus to proſtitute them, or ſuffer them to be ſo abus'd; yet ſuch Progreſs have theſe Sophiſters made in the World, by educating Men to their Minds, that we muſt wholly begin anew, and diveſt our ſelves of all we have heretofore learn'd, if we will be free from this Impoſition and Slavery.

Chap. II.

So ſoon as a Child ſhall have his Play-thing ſtole, and finds himſelf aggriev'd, and ſhall take away the other Child's Play-thing by way of Satisfaction, or to aggrieve *him*, he hath a Notion of Juſtice. And as ſoon as he ſhall wantonly throw his fine Cap in the Dirt, and deprive himſelf of the Pleaſure of wearing it, and be ſenſible of this, he hath the Notion of *Wiſdom* and *Folly*.

And by theſe two ſimple Notions do we judge in all Caſes, Moral and Political.

And as we thus arrive at theſe *Notions* by the ſame Means as we do by thoſe of *Colours*, ſo is our Agreement in them as univerſal, and every Man hath the ſame Application to the ſame Name; as appears by the general Reference to *Conſcience*, and our own Cenſure of our own Actions.

And

And ſo obvious to *univerſal common Senſe* is the Agreement of what is meant by theſe Terms, that when we would make our Actions have a better View than they deſerve, we conceal ſome part of the *Action*, or Motive to it, but no Man pretends to ſay *Injuſtice* or *Folly* is any other than it is. If he hath a mind the *Injuſtice* ſhou'd not be ſeen, he uſes ſuch Artifice as he wou'd if he deſign'd to conceal the true *Colour* of an Object; that is, keep it from being perfectly diſcern'd by the Eyeſight.

In Things Natural it is indiſputable, and immediately ſelf-evident, that ALL THINGS ARE AS THEY ARE, and *the Senſes of all Men ſee them alike*, and make no Alteration in them.

In the ſuppos'd Actions of Supernatural Beings the Caſe is the ſame, that all Men ſee the Actions and Operations alike; and, that thoſe Actions and Operations are what they are, and receive no Alteration from Senſe.

That is in one general Propoſition.

The Knowledge *of all Things*, Phyſical, Metaphyſical, *and* Moral, ENTER by SENSE *and* EXPERIENCE, *and all Things are as they are*, and receive no

Alteration from Senſe, *but there is an* UNIVERSAL *Agreement in perceiving them.*

How then comes different Opinion? The Anſwer to this is, indeed, what we ſhall admit at preſent for a Paradox, (*viz.*) That there is in reality NO DIFFERENCE IN OPINION, (if *Opinion* is *Judgment*) but Men make a *Falſe Report* of what their Senſes have ſeen.

For as all Things are what they are, and all Men ſee them alike, the Difference is in the *Report* of what they have ſeen, and not in the Things, nor in their Apprehenſion and Judgment.

Therefore if Men loſe not Sight of the *Facts* and *Appearances* in their manner of Reaſoning on them, and by Deſign or Ignorance ſpeak falſely of what they have ſeen, they muſt all ſpeak alike, and make the *ſame* Report from their Senſes of the *ſame* Things. And this, in every Propoſition of *complicated* Knowledge, as well as in ſingle Caſes, which are evident, as it were, by Intuition; for this *complicated Opinion* is no other than an Amount of ſeveral of thoſe ſingle *Facts* and *Appearances* conſider'd.

ſider'd apart, and afterwards added together. And if we keep the true View of every *ſingle Fact* and *Appearance* ſtill before us in the whole Courſe of our Reaſoning, and carefully *report* nothing of every *ſingle Appearance* but what our Senſes have ſeen, then in the adding theſe together, the Concluſion, or Propoſition, containing the Amount of the whole, being thus as honeſtly and carefully *reported*, muſt be as NECESSARILY EVIDENT as the *ſingle Facts*, the Amount of which it is.

A and *B* walking together, they eſpy a Stick lying in the Water. *A* wants it to walk with; *B* tells him 'tis crooked, What would he do with it? No, ſays *A*, it is ſtraight, for hold a ſtraight Stick in the Water, and it will appear crooked. *B* ſays, It is crooked for all that, for few Sticks are naturally ſtraight. *A* perſiſts hotly, that he BELIEVES it to be ſtraight; and *B*, that he BELIEVES it to be crooked. *C* accidentally comes by, and tells them, This is a doubtful Caſe; for 'tis poſſible, and even probable, it may be crooked, and as probable it may be ſtraight, and you are both in the wrong. If you wou'd truly

truly underſtand one another, and to do the Caſe Juſtice, you can ſay no more, but that you ſee it thro' Water, and it is indeterminable whether it be, crooked or ſtraight.

Now, if *A* be a Mathematician, and endeavours to form a Diagram, to ſhew how the Medium of Water cauſes a ſtraight Line to appear curved, he muſt yet ſhew, that this curved Line is the ſame with the Stick in diſpute lying in the Water, and that to Eyeſight too, or elſe he only transfers the Repreſentation of the Caſe from one Medium to another, which may be falſe too; ſo that ſtill it depends on no other Teſtimony than Senſe. Now, if all the reſt of the Alphabet were preſent, and unconcern'd, they would ſee that both *A* and *B* have given an unjuſt Account of what their Senſes have ſeen, and that *C* is in the right.

But how this Confuſion ariſes, is not ſo eaſily diſcern'd.

It is a compound Miſchief, caus'd not only by making a falſe *Report*, deſignedly as ſuch, from what their Senſes have ſeen, but alſo want of a proper Term and Method of Speaking to expreſs the true Amount of what they have ſeen; for

for no other Word occurring but *believe*, and that comprehenſively extending either to a poſitive Certainty, or Probability, they both uſe it, and in deſcanting on it with Warmth, and to take Advantage of each other, *will* underſtand it in the worſt Senſe: And this renders the Diſpute more irreconcileable.

But throw away the Word *Believe*, and ask *A* if he means, that he knows it to be POSITIVELY CERTAIN that it is ſtraight; or *B*, if he for a POSITIVE CERTAINTY means it to be crooked, and they will both ſay No, but it's very LIKELY: So that the Difference between them is very ſmall.

And on this manner is all Error, and Difference in Opinion, produc'd.

CHAP.

Chap. III.

WE will now try a more complicated Caſe; and further to obviate the Objection, That there can be no ſelf-evident Concluſion, like an Arithmetical Proof, without going over the whole Sum or Diſcurſion again, we ſhall here therefore give firſt the Concluſion.

And this ſelf-evident Concluſion is as forcible a Proof that we have reaſon'd right, as a Proof of Subſtraction by Addition, and more forcible than a Proof of Diviſion by Multiplication, becauſe more eaſily inſpected, and as general; beſides, you may miſtake in Multiplication too.

1. We ſee no one Inſtance to Senſe, of Animals being in any Star, and therefore whoever ſaith he knows, or believes it to be poſitively certain that the Stars are inhabited, lyes.

2. We

2. We ſee no Inſtance to Senſe that the Stars cannot have, or have not, Animals; and therefore whoſoever ſaith he poſitively *knows*, or *believes*, they have not Animals, lyes.

3. We ſee a Star that hath a dark Body, large as this Earth, diſpos'd, with wonderful Ingenuity of Poſition and Motion, to receive Light from the ſame Sun with us, of which we know no Uſe but for Animals. And Heat alſo, which we ſee here cauſes Motion and Mutation of Parts, by which Generation is produc'd, and Animal Life ſubſiſts. That by all the comparative Inſtances of the Productions of the Author of Nature, in appointing Things for Uſes, and Uſes for Things, it is highly improbable the ſame Perfection, Fulneſs, and Wiſdom ſhould be wanting where we can't ſee. That by the aforeſaid Evidences to Senſe, and by all the Obſervations we can make, or can expect to ſee at ſuch a diſtance, or that we could ſee of this Earth at the ſame diſtance, 'tis probable that Star is inhabited.

It is not worth while to apply this Caſe to the Nicety of indeterminable and probable, only take notice, That we mean a Thing to be indeterminable when both the Negative and Affirmative are probable.

The Proceſs to the former Concluſion may be thus made.

Certain Appearances in the Affirmative.

Large as this Earth.

Opake.

Wiſely diſpos'd for receiving Light and Heat from the ſame Sun.

Our Senſes cannot extend to ſee Animals, if they are there.

The ſame Wiſdom in its Poſition and Laws of Motion, which we ſee in every Thing here.

Probable Appearances or Facts from comparative Inferences of the Operation of the ſame Things here.

The Heat of the Sun produces here Motion, Mutation of Parts, Agitation, Rarity and Denſity; thoſe render it proper for the Habitation and Generation of Animals: The ſame Wiſdom and Perfection may be expected to exert it

it ſelf to the ſame Fulneſs. Light is of no Uſe, but for Animals who have Sight.

Appearances in the Negative.

We ſee no Animals.

We can't be aſſur'd there is an Atmoſphere for Animals to live in.

Subſtract. *Our Senſes cannot extend to ſee, whether there are Animals or no,* from *we ſee no Animals*; and there remains a bare Poſſibility of there being no Animals.

Suſtract *Heat of the Sun, Motion, Mutation,* &c. from *no Aſſurance to Sight of an Atmoſphere,* and there remains the Means of producing *one*, and a Probability. To this add the Conſideration of the Inconſiſtency in expecting that the *ſame* Light and Heat ſhou'd not have the *ſame* or like Uſes and Effects, that the *ſame* Wiſdom ſhou'd ceaſe to act as perfectly out of our ſight, to a Fulneſs any more than in it; and the Negative Improbability appears without any Inſtance to ſet againſt it; and the Concluſion is a Poſſibility it is inhabited, a Poſſibility 'tis not inhabited: a Probabi-

lity 'tis capable of Inhabitants, an Improbability it ſhou'd not be inhabited.

And remark here, the Difference between a Concluſion being REALLY TRUE and equal to the Amount of the premis'd Circumſtances, and being SELF-EVIDENTLY TRUE, or the real Amount of the premis'd Facts, as the three firſt Propoſitions are.

Now this is purely *Arithmetical*, and no other than a ranging of certain *Matters of Fact* and *Appearances to Senſe*, of differing Proportions and Value, negatively and affirmatively, like added to like, and differing ſubſtracted: And if we keep the ſame Juſtice down to the Concluſion, the *Facit* muſt be as *ſelf-evident* a Declaration, and Sum of them together, as every Particular was *ſelf-evident*; nor is this liable to any Objection, but what is common to Arithmetick. Thus

My Servant tells me, he hath bought me ten Yards of Silk at Seven Shillings *per* Yard, which coſt him Three Pounds Fifteen Shillings. Now I may be ſo negligent as not to reckon this my ſelf, and ſo be impos'd on; but if I come to conſider it, I find here is an Error, and

and the Man hath miſinform'd me in one of the Reports; either it cou'd not coſt him ſo much in the whole, or it coſt more by the Yard: Now, in which of theſe the Error is, I know not, till I am better inform'd of the Facts, nevertheleſs my Concluſion is perfect and good, for the Queſtion to me is, Whether Seven Shillings *per* Yard amounts to Three Pounds Fifteen Shillings, which I certainly know amounts to but Three Pounds Ten Shillings; and if I was to be ask'd, Whether the Man is an honeſt Man or a Knave that relates this, it is another Queſtion, and I muſt, to anſwer that, inform my ſelf, Whether he hath told me a knowing Untruth; and when I am inform'd of this Fact, I can as eaſily tell whether he is an honeſt Man or a Lyar, as I cou'd before the other Queſtion.

Perhaps in the end I may be inform'd, That my Servant gave Seven Shillings and Six Pence *per* Yard, and then the Sum amounts to Three Pounds Fifteen Shillings: And I ſo find it, but the Error hath neither been in my Judgment, nor in the deficiency of Arithmetick, but a falſe Report of the Matter of Fact hath been made, it hath been brought

to me in a falſe Medium, the real Colour hath been conceal'd, and a fictitious one repreſented to my Apprehenſion or Perception, there hath been Injuſtice done the Caſe, but my *Judgment* hath as *infallibly* determin'd on what my Apprehenſion ſaw, and the Art of Arithmetick hath been as ſufficiently and truly apply'd in making Ten times Seven Shillings, Three Pounds Ten Shillings, as in making Ten times Seven Shillings and Six Pence, Three Pounds Fifteen Shillings.

And this is like the 'foregoing Caſe, if we may ſuppoſe, that ſince our Calculation the Atmoſphere of the Moon hath appear'd to our Sight. Now, if the Queſtion was, Is the Moon capable of Inhabitants? and this was all that was wanting to confirm it, then the addition of this Appearance to Senſe makes it amount to *a poſitive Certainty*. But the Man made as faithful a Report of the Determination of his Judgment on the Appearances to general Perception, in his former Sentence, That it was only *probable* of being capable of Inhabitants, as he doth now of its being *certain*.

So

So alſo, in proceſs of Time, one of theſe Stars, on coming nearer us, appears to be a Comet, and by ſeveral *Phænomena* diſcovers great Diſorders, ſuch as may be expected from its approaching too near the Heat of the Sun, and is thus render'd incapable of being inhabited; and if this was miſtaken for a Star, and the Diſpute on it, 'tis even then decided as improbable, if not impoſſible. But as to the other *Stars*, not diſcovering ſuch Diſorder, *they* appear hereby to be ſuch Bodies as we expect, and that the Sun doth operate on them after the ſame manner it doth here, and there are ſuch *Motions*, *Agitations*, and *Mutations* as are neceſſary for Generation and Life.

So that this Diſpute turns not at all on Words, but on the introducing ſome new Appearance to Senſe, the Object of general Perception, and therefore knowable to the Oppoſer. All that is to be done, is then to prove it knowable, and the Concluſion is again a general Determination.

But this adds but little to our Queſtion, Whether it be certainly inhabited? and not, Whether it be capable of it? So that we can only ſay, by

theſe Additions it is more probable, or moſt probable; or, if you are fond of the Arithmetical Parallel, 'tis probable, and a Fraction more; or probable and two Thirds; but 'tis by no means to be ſaid certain.

Now my aforeſaid Servant may tell me wholly a Lye, and it might neither coſt him Seven Shillings and Six Pence *per* Yard, nor Three Pounds Fifteen Shillings in the whole: But if it is of any Conſequence to me, I ſhall take care to make him give me an exact Account of every Circumſtance, as *how*, and *where*, and will have concurrent Proofs of the Fact.

As to the Nature of *Teſtimony*, (beſide what hath been here and elſewhere ſaid, that the *Proofs* muſt be *irreſiſtible* and GENERAL) I know no better way of learning it, than on the *Royal Exchange*, and by doing as in common Traffick and Commerce, where we may find ſufficient Means to ſatisfie any prudent Man in what manner and proportion Credit is to be given to Perſons relating Things, according as thoſe Things are more or leſs valuable to themſelves or us.

And

And this is what I mean by recommending universally the COMMON USE of *Common Sense* in all Cases: That is, I wou'd have Men take the same care of Knaves and Cheats in Religion and Politicks, and use the SAME *Common Sense* to defend the whole of their Estates, Lives, and Liberties, for themselves, and their Posterity, and the Peace of their Country, as they do to secure every trifling Sum of Money: And those who shall not think this satisfactory, I doubt will meet with nothing to content them, but pretended Astrologers and Figure-casters, and so must return back to their Jugglers and Miracle-mongers; but this will very little affect our Universal Method of Reasoning, any more than it will perswade a Merchant out of Arithmetick, or out of his usual Care of being defrauded of his Money by Cheats and Lyars.

CHAP.

Chap. IV.

THE Objectors ſay truly, that an *Idea* is a true *Idea*, ſo is a *Picture* a true *Picture*; but they may be falſe Ideas and falſe Pictures of the Things they ſhou'd repreſent; and the Deſign of that Expreſſion is for this very Intention, to give a Caution of Reaſoning at all on *Ideas*: For it is an almoſt certain Way of doing Injuſtice to Things in the Apprehenſion, by repreſenting them in a Medium; for an *Idea* is not the Thing it ſelf, the Appearance or Matter of Fact, but the *Picture* of it; and in a cloſe Inquiſition after Truth muſt not be ſo much as mention'd; for 'tis like talking of the *Picture*, and not of the Perſon, when we may have the ſame Opportunity of one, as of the other.

To argue on Ideas, is removing the Object farther off, and abating the Force and Impreſſion it ſhou'd make on the Mind,

Mind, and is one of the PRINCIPAL ERRORS which this ſelf-evident Manner of Reaſoning is deſign'd to obviate, and againſt which it is directly level'd; and tho' we cannot forbid the Uſe of the Word IDEA, as we do the Word *Believe*, yet in examining ſtrictly into what Facts and Appearances we have to make up our Amount, in order to form a true Concluſion, we muſt abſolutely forbid the very *naming an* IDEA, as a moſt pernicious and dangerous Way of introducing a FALLACY.

And this was *Zeno*'s Error, in the Story of the Wax Quinces; for, on the Sight only, without the Teſtimony of any other Senſe, he conceiv'd an IDEA of their being Quinces, and ſo reported; whereas had he reported only what his Senſes perceiv'd, he had ſaid juſt what his Oppoſers, and every-body elſe, ſaid and ſaw, (*viz.*) the Shape and Colour of Quinces. And had he known it was to have been an Inſtance of ſuch great Conſequence, he wou'd certainly have been on his Guard, and ſo have ſaid. But, as it was, he cou'd not have had a more convincing Argument of the Danger of Speaking more than Matter of Fact and Appearance to Senſe; which

which was the Method of Reaſoning he attempted to teach.

I may here again have ſome wonderful learned Admonition to inform me, That I do not conſider it Philoſophically enough; for if we *predicate* on any Thing which our Senſes are not that inſtant beholding, it is on the Remembrance of it, that is the *Idea:* To which I ſhall make no Anſwer, but proceed to ſay, That if we leave talking on Matter of Fact, and Appearance to Senſe, to *predicate* on *Ideas*, 'tis predicating how that Thing is painted in our Mind, that is our Conception of it, and the little or no Difference there is in this View, between our *Ideas*, *Conceptions*, and *Opinions*, is as obvious as the Tranſition to an already *receiv'd Opinion* is unavoidable. And this is then arguing from Opinion to the ſame Opinion, or ſuchlike cloudy Amuſement, not worth while to conſider; for it is truly confounding the Apprehenſion, and arguing from PARTIAL CONCEPTIONS, inſtead of from GENERAL PERCEPTION: And this was the Error of the Stick in the Water; they argued not from it, where their Apprehenſions were univerſal, but according to their particular

Ideas;

Ideas; and thus, in moſt Diſputes, may a Chain or Connection of *Ideas* be made to both Sides of the Queſtion.

Whereas we muſt have Reaſoning from UNIVERSAL APPREHENSION to the INVOLUNTARY JUDGMENT, and then we have an UNIVERSAL DETERMINATION.

For to argue from *Ideas* to *Belief*, is Amuſement all the way, and arguing from Nothing to Nothing.

CHAP. V.

TO avoid the ill Conſequences of this, great Care ought to be had to the Choice of Words, and their Application; for there is (what we ſhall beg leave to call) a *magical Force* in ſome Words, conjuring up an *Idea* very different from the Intention of the Speaker, and raiſes an Image in the Underſtanding vaſtly diſproportion'd to the Thing 'tis deſign'd to report, and ſometimes even contrary to it. Nor

is

is the Relator's own Mind exempt from this, but the Word by which a Thing is expreſs'd, will, in proceſs of time, work up an *Idea* adequate to it ſelf in its moſt uſual Signification, and the Thing deſign'd to be remember'd be very much alter'd.

Nor doth a Word give only a differing *Idea* of the one ſingle Thing of which it is put for the Denomination, but it alſo cauſes a *whole Diſcurſion* in the Underſtanding, which is excited by the Word, and runs on to ſeveral ſucceſſive Conceptions; juſt like a Prompt, when a Man hath had one Word given him, he goes on repeating a whole Paragraph, or ſeveral Sentences, relating to, and ſucceeding it, which he would not otherwiſe have thought on.

But this ſecret Force of Words may have a very good Uſe, for by this means it is that a ſhort Propoſition becomes ſelf-evident, as containing all the Terms which excite a Diſcurſion in the Mind, in ſo ſmall a compaſs, that many times the Propoſition doth not exceed in the number of Words, the number of Pages, which contain the Diſcurſion.

By

By this means may an Orator bring ſecretly diſtant Parts of his Oration together, and keep ſeveral Places up in a lively View and Force at one time; and by Ignorance in this Matter doth oftentimes a Propoſition deſign'd to ſhew a Matter for Truth, prove it ſelf a *ſelf-evident Lye.*

So that preſuppoſing the Violences and Artifices to be remov'd, which hinder Reaſon from doing its Office; and the Application of *Common Senſe*, by but barely *touching Things*, makes them riſe up immediately in their proper REALITY, and *Things that are as they are do* APPEAR *as they are:*

The Reaſon is, 'tis readily ſeen what Facts and Appearances are reported, and related to the Terms, and their Agreement or Diſagreement; or whether there are any Facts and Appearances only Conceits and vain Ideas; and this is ſo ſuddenly done, that tho' we will attempt to ſhew how, yet we cannot adequately expreſs the Celerity of the Mind in the Operation.

Creech's Tranſlation of *Lucretius*, lib. 4, page 126.

But now AVOID *their* groſs Miſtakes,
that teach
The Limbs were made for Work; *a Uſe for each*;
The EYES *deſign'd to* SEE, *the Tongue to Talk*,
The LEGS MADE STRONG, *and* KNIT *to Feet, to Walk.*
The ARMS MADE LONG, *and* FIRM, *the ſervile Hands*
To Work, as HEALTH REQUIRES, *as* LIFE COMMANDS.

For proper Uſes *were deſign'd for None.*

We thought them fit, and made them for our Uſe.

Now this is a *ſelf-evident Lye* without any Argument, only by removing from the Reader the Artifice by which he is bigotted to a Veneration for a Man whom he takes for a Philoſopher, or for an Eſteem of any Thing in Print.

Sup-

Suppoſe a Man, of but common Parts and Curioſity, was comparing and thinking on the Terms contain'd in this Propoſition, he ponders in his Mind thus: *Eyes* not made to *ſee*. *Legs* made *ſtrong*, and *knit* to the Feet too, not to walk. *Arms* made *long*, *firm*; *Hands*, *work*; then Health requires, Life commands, walking, working, ſeeing. And theſe Words, *made* and *knit*, going through the whole Diſcurſion, excite ſeveral other Conceptions, ſuch as how, for what, by whom, *made* and *knit*: Then he can't *ſee* with his *Arms*, nor walk with his *Eyes*; no, nor his Hands, nor no Man doth otherwiſe with them than he doth. 'Tis very wonderful they ſhou'd all happen ſo proper, and all Men ſhou'd think ſo, and do ſo.

Beſides, this Philoſopher ſaith, They were *made*, they were *knit*; he ſaith, *Life commands*, and *Health requires*, ſuch Uſes: Nothing could be better than *knitting* the *Leg* to the *Foot*, to walk with, *&c.* 'Tis very difficult to think they were not made and knit for theſe Purpoſes; he muſt ſurely be miſtaken.

Now a Diſcurſion on this manner, where Common Senſe hath its entire

Liberty, is ſo ſudden and (as it were) inſtantaneous, that I do not heartily call it a Diſcurſion: But, indeed, theſe Terms are ſo unluckily choſen, that one would almoſt think it impoſſible for a Man to be ſincere, or even ſerious, that cou'd form ſuch a Propoſition, the Words of which are as naturally diſpos'd to force an immediate View of the Falſity, as the bringing two Lines together, the one as long again as the other, and pretending thereby to prove them equal: *Eyes* NOT made *to ſee*, *Legs* made *ſtrong*, and *knit to Feet*, but NOT *to walk*, tho' *Life requires Sight* and *Walking*, ſhew an Inequality and Abſurdity ſwifter than the Words can be utter'd.

CHAP. VI.

I Know not but, on Examination, we may find, that moſt of the abſurd Notions of the Soul may have obtain'd among ſome Men of great Speculation, by

by no other Means, but on their not knowing, or not being guarded againſt this *magical Force* of Words; and from hence is caus'd that juſt Complaint in *Cicero*, That while he was reading on the Immortality of the Soul, it ſeem'd very clear to him, but when he laid by the Book he loſt all again: For the Terms not being adequate to the *Appearances*, and *Matters of Fact*, which they were deſign'd to report, the whole Diſcurſion in the Book being forgot, but the chief Terms remember'd, they worked up *Ideas* proportional to themſelves, according to their habitual Uſe in common Caſes, and not proportional to the Matters related to in the Book.

Thus we ſee, by many Matters of Fact, that the Mind acts and lives, and hath Powers and Operations, which no Matter that can come under our Cognizance can thus act, perceive, and operate, but when we come to carry the Enquiry farther, and by examining into its Eſſence, ask the Queſtion, What SUBSTANCE it is of? This Word SUBSTANCE, in ſpite of all Definitions and and Agreements to the contrary between particular Perſons, will excite a groſſer Idea than the Word MATTER;

even an Idea of Matter with the Accident of *Denſity*: And 'tis the general and habitual Uſe of the Word WILL prevail in the Underſtanding above all particular Applications, or arbitrarily ſaying it SHALL there mean otherwiſe.

It hath been obſerv'd by ſome, That as there are many popular Errors, ſo there are alſo a few vulgar Truths, which are the Effect of a ſimple and unſophiſticated Perception; and inſtead of being improv'd by the Learned, have been diſtinguiſh'd and defin'd away by their unnatural Subtilties and Cobweb-ſpun Speculations; and perhaps we may find an Inſtance of this here.

'Tis a general Objection, That we can't know the Soul to be immortal, becauſe we can know nothing at all but that it is Matter; and if it is any Thing elſe, we can neither find Thoughts to conceive, nor Words to expreſs what; and therefore 'tis not expreſſible, nor knowable, what *Subſtance* 'tis of. And becauſe we can't conceive that *Subſtance* can be any thing but Matter, *Subſtance* that is groſs Matter gets the Aſcendant in the Underſtanding, and the Appearances of the Power of this Mind are thwar-

thwarted and confounded, and at length quite obliterated.

I ſee not but we ſhall find this is chiefly for want of a Care in the Choice of Words to expreſs and conceive it by, for the Word *Spirit* is laid aſide or diſtinguiſh'd away. But, hath not the Vulgar ſome Advantage of the nice ſpeculative Perſon in this Caſe? For, ask a common Man what he means by a *Spirit*, and what a *Spirit* is, and he will tell you, (tho' very likely after a groſs and rude manner of Speaking) That a *Spirit* is a living Somewhat that don't die with the Body, and that can ſee all Things, and not be ſeen; can paſs through Doors, and Glaſs, and Walls, and Stones; that you can't cut it, nor hurt it; that it can't be burn'd to Death by Fire, nor drown'd by Water, nor cruſh'd by Earth, nor blow'd away by Winds; alſo, That it hath no Shape, but alters that as it hath occaſion.

Now here is a Notion of Something, in contradiction to any Animal or Thing, that can be made of Matter, and a proper Term (*viz. Spirit*) to expreſs it by, which is commonly underſtood (in all vulgar Converſation) to ſignify the ſame Thing.

But

But you may, if you pleaſe, indeed, by asking this Man, what SUBSTANCE this SPIRIT is of, both confound him and your ſelf too; but ſo far as his own Notion goes, till thus diſturb'd, it is a clear Conception of ſomething contrary to Body, and all its Accidents. It will therefore be worth our while to ſee, if there be any real Phænomena belonging to this aggregate Amount expreſs'd by the Word *Spirit*, or if they are only empty Ideas, kept up by Error and Bigotry.

We find by the Motions and Images of the Materials on which, and by which, the Senſes act, and the Organs and Means conveying them, that they are the ſame in Brutes as in Men, but the Power operating on them vaſtly different.

By the wonderful Efforts of this Power on the Deaf and Dumb, to ſubſtitute Actions for Speech, the Invention the ſame Power hath exerted to convey Knowledge beyond the ordinary Capacity of the Senſes, as in Writing, and the Preſcience diſcoverable in Dreams, we find by theſe that the Mind is ſome living, perſonal Power, of vaſt greater Capacity than the Body can admit it to exert, and that it is not of the Matter of the Body, but even by acting and perceiving, when

when the Senſes and Body are aſleep, that it is capable of diſtinct Exiſtence from it.

Now this, in reſpect to its Eſſence, amounts to no more than its being Immaterial, that is, not Material; and this Word *Immaterial*, can have no more than a negative Meaning, that it is not of the Matter of the Body, or, at moſt, not of any viſible, or tangible, or any ſenſible Matter, but can ſignify nothing to ſhew affirmatively what it is.

Here we are plainly deficient, in a ſenſe, and can as clearly diſcover it, as a Man of good Parts, who is Deaf and Dumb, can diſcover his own Defect; and much clearer than a Man born Blind can his want of Sight.

A Deaf Man can find, that other Perſons have Means of Communication with themſelves, and Perception, which he hath not, and ſees that there are diſtinct Operations produc'd by opening and ſhutting the Lips, and by Muſical Inſtruments, which are of great Conſequence, he eaſily ſees a Deficiency in himſelf, of perceiving what this is, and how perform'd, and finds he can arrive at no adequate Conception thereof; but he goes not all back again, and gives thoſe Senſes the Lie, by which

which he DOTH perceive, becauſe they can't account to him for what is apparently not in their Power.

And this is the grand Obſtacle in the preſent Caſe; for no body denies the 'foregoing Appearances, but becauſe they can't find that thoſe very Facts which they KNOW are done, and thoſe Appearances which they SEE do ſhew *themſelves*, cannot be diſcern'd how they are *done* and produc'd, by the Senſes we have. They do juſt as if a Deaf Man ſhou'd think Speaking and Muſick is not Smelling, Taſting, Feeling, or Seeing, therefore it is nothing, tho' he ſees it is ſomething. Now, indeed, if this Deaf Man did not *ſee* the Force of it, it would not be his Fault: And this is the Caſe of the Blind. But here we ſee with the Deaf an apparent Reality and Force, and have Knowledge to a poſitive Certainty of ſome acting, perceiving Perſonality, whoſe Eſſence we have as certain a negative Knowledge, is not perceptible to the Senſes we have.

Notwithſtanding this, we ſhould gladly part with this offenſive Word *Immaterial*, which we took only for the preſent; but there are ſome Obſtacles in our way, as, Firſt,

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We ſee Man can begin Motion in his own Mind, without any Touch from without to excite it. Now, tho' we know of no Property nor Accident belonging to Matter, which can cauſe it to begin Motion, yet ſince it hath been receiv'd, That not only *what is touch'd, but what touches, muſt be Body*, we will ſee what we can find further relating to this Head.

A Man an hundred Leagues off receives a Letter, informing him his Houſe is burn'd, and his Son kill'd; he immediately falls into violent Agitations, his Tears burſt out, his Colour changes, he ſwoons, recovers, threatens, laments, purpoſes a Journey, and goes forward; now, What Effluvia of Matter is in this Letter to Contiguity? or, What Motion in it to cauſe Senſation by any Medium?

If the Letter is in any foreign Language, that he underſtands, it is the ſame; or in any Character, whether *Greek*, *Arabick*, or *Roman*, the Shape of the Letters, nor the Ink and Paper, they may be blue, or red, or black; or if the Story be told, or read to him, it alters not the Caſe; the Knowledge of the Misfortune, and all the Conſe-

quences of Paſſions and Actions ſucceeding it, are ſtill the ſame. Nay, if a Deaf and Dumb Man (whoſe Signs are familiar to him) relates it, the ſame Effects are by either Means produc'd.

But ſuppoſe this Story ſhou'd be falſe, Why hath the Mind permitted it ſelf to ſuffer all this Pain? Why, I know not, but by and by we ſhall find, that in its abſtracted ſelf it hath ſuffer'd not at all.

For tho' we find it doth not receive Knowledge by this Way, and by Contact, which is all the Uſe we at preſent make of this Inſtance, and our Enquiry goes no further; yet if it did, I ſee it wou'd be very difficult to account how 'tis receiv'd: 'Tis certain that we have no knowable Conceptions but what enter'd by the Senſes: 'Tis alſo certain, that the Mind hath diſtinct Operations by Preſcience; but whether this before us is receiv'd long before 'tis communicated by Letter; or, whether the Mind, ſwifter than Light, makes an Excurſion, or an Emanation then; or, whether it is aſſiſted by ſome other Dæmon or Spirit like it ſelf, or by what other way, I doubt we muſt refer among the not knowable.

But

But this we know, that it can and doth act, and perceive of it ſelf, notwithſtanding which, in reſpect to the harmoniouſly complicated Union with the Body, it cannot act but by the Laws of that Union; and the Diſorders and Impediments the Mind is embarraſs'd with in this Caſe from the Body, and having too few Senſes to act by, may not improperly be attempted to be accounted for, after the ſame manner as we do thoſe of Drunkenneſs and Madneſs.

That is, the Fluids and Senſes are diſorder'd by Accidents natural to them. A Man's muſical Inſtrument is broke, or his Pens ſpoilt, he can't write nor play, for he can't act with them any otherwiſe than they are adapted to act. So, tho' the Mind hath invented this Method of conveying Knowledge by Writing, it ſeems to be no other, but as it is circumſcrib'd to ſuch Laws. That there muſt be ſomewhat to cauſe an Attention and Expectation by the Sight; and there are certain Laws, that ſuch Symbols ſhall ſignifie ſuch Things when the Eye ſhall ſee them, and the Ear

hear them; and the Mind cannot exceed theſe.

The Caſe ſeems to be the ſame, as if that Man's Friend ſhould have ſent him another Letter to undeceive him, but in the mean time the Man hath loſt the Uſe of his Eyeſight by ſome Diſeaſe, and can't read this Letter, nor get any-body to read it to him for ſome Hours, and therefore is all this while ignorant of the Contents. Juſt ſo it may be with the Mind, that may know the Caſe, or it may be knowable to it, but cannot communicate it, nor expreſs the Knowledge, till ſome ſuch Means ſhall offer as the Senſes are habituated to receive it by.

And ſomething like this muſt be the very Caſe; for there is nothing in neither of theſe Letters, nor in the Senſes that ſee them; nor doth it yet appear that Knowledge is at all convey'd to the Mind by this Means, but explain'd by it by this Means, according to the Laws and Cuſtoms of its operating with the Senſes. For, let a Man, not capable of reading at all, or ignorant of the Language in which it is wrote, look never ſo diligently on this Paper, and

and tho' it is his own Concern, yet is no Emotion or Alteration produc'd. Tho' the Eyeſight is exerted and brought to the Paper and the Medium of Light, and if it was perform'd by any Contact or Motion by the Light, or any other Medium, theſe are the ſame to the Ignorant as to the Learned; the Ignorant ſees as truly the Paper, and the Shape and Colour of the Characters, as the Learned (even to the copying them) and this is the Office of Sight. But what is this to Knowledge?

This Communication of Knowledge is the ſame manner of Operation as the Remembrance of the Mind's Preſcience by ſome Dreams, and the Confuſions and Hindrances by intermix'd Fancy and Bodily Diſorders, do plainly ſhew an exact Agreement to the Diſorder in this Caſe, and the Difficulties it hath to explain it ſelf after either of theſe manners, have a very great Affinity.

So the Force of Expectation, which is excited in the Imagination, to an Attention in forming the Cure of a Diſtemper by a Charm, is of the ſame Nature.

It ſeems as if ſome Perſons, in their Speculations on this Caſe, after they have parted with the Word *Spirit*, do forget they are talking on a living, acting Perſonality, and therefore proceed to predicate on it, as an Effuſion of Aerial or Ætherial Matter, and form an Idea of its being ſomewhat diſſever'd; and from hence they are apt to imagine, it may be ſome Power of Matter like Sounds to the Deaf, which we want a Senſe to perceive, and may endeavour to account for it by the Motion of ſome Medium; but this obviates not the *Appearance to Senſe* of the Ignorant's receiving Knowledge by looking on a Letter in a ſtrange Language, as well as the Learned.

Beſides, we may obſerve in ſome of our Dreams, we ſee Perſons meet, and Things plac'd after ſuch a manner, as they have had no Motion in Matter to their being ſo plac'd, till ſome Hours and Days after; and therefore nothing can be caus'd by Motion of Matter, where there is apparently no Motion.

'Tis alſo further obſervable, That the Preſcience of theſe Trifles, tho' they are frequent, are of no moment or uſe to us to know, yet do they neverthe-

leſs

leſs indicate an Univerſality of perceiving all Things on this manner; like the Eye, which, tho' it is principally directed to ſome one great Building or Mountain, yet ſees every Tree, Man walking, Bird flying, in the intermediate Space; ſo as ſoon as theſe intelligent Agents which begin Motion tend towards it, be it of great or little Conſequence, the Mind diſcerns 'em.

'Tis a great Interruption to our proſecuting the Knowledge of theſe Things, that the Appearances of this Power are moſtly ſuch as the 'foregoing, which are generally held too trifling for a ſerious Man to regard, and are therefore mention'd but ſeldom, and then imperfectly, becauſe unwillingly; not only for their being generally held as trifling, but becauſe there is a great ill Conveniency attends it, in leading unwary People (too ready of themſelves to run) into Superſtition, and to depend on Viſionary Fancies, and perplex themſelves with looking for Omens, and I know not what Whimſies, inſtead of directing their Actions by right Reaſon.

But if we obſerve, that thoſe Things do rather ſurprize us, by the Agree-

ableneſs of the *Events* after they happen, than ſerve to prevent ſuch *Events* by; alſo, that for one Caſe of any Uſe or Moment to us, we have fifty which are of no manner of Conſequence, only to ſhew the Mind hath ſuch Preſcience; then the Difficulty it hath to convey the Remembrance of them to us, do plainly point out the Non-neceſſity there is of any ſuch Preſcience.

And if I may be permitted to give a tranſient Opinion, I ſee not but the Mind is out of its proper Duty, in ſtriving too much to exert this preſcient Power; for it cauſes Confuſion, and breaks in upon the Oeconomy of the harmonious Union; and, 'tis certain, that Man hath Reaſon to direct his Actions, and by that to make the beſt Uſe of what his SENSES help him to; and herein conſiſts his Happineſs and Duty, and this, well regarded, produces Happineſs and Goodneſs enough in this Life.

I ſhall here alſo remind, That Providence is not to be look'd for in every Action and Tranſaction, but Men are left to the Laws of their Nature and Conſtitution, and they have Reaſon whereby to govern and form all their Pro-

Proceedings. But if the Actions of ſome Perſons, whether directed right or wrong, ſhall interfere with ſomething that hath Relation to another Matter, that muſt be brought to paſs in order to ſome grand Deſign of Providence in Relation to the whole, here we may perceive Providence doth interpoſe and prevent, and this but ſeldom, but it doth more ſeldom appear, if ever that Providence begins and appoints a whole Series of Actions; and therefore is only to be look'd for in ſuch Interpoſition and Prevention, which Man cannot know nor expect, but muſt proceed according to his *Reaſon* in all his Affairs.

And here it is further to be obſerv'd, that this Preſcience of the Mind, is, for the moſt part, ſomething regarding the Preſervation of the *Union* from Injuries, or from what might cauſe a Separation, ſhewing that its Buſineſs is to act *by* and *with* the Body, and in ſtriving to exert its Power, and making extraordinary Efforts to this Purpoſe, may a ſenſitive Soul be form'd.

And as Knowledge in an unknown Tongue or Character, is not receiv'd but by Teaching, this Teaching ſeems to be

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an Agreement or Appointment, as it were, between the ſenſitive Soul and Mind, improv'd to an Habit and Cuſtom, that ſuch Things in the Senſe ſhall ſignify ſuch other Accidents or Tranſactions.

We pretend not to know what the Eſſence of this ſenſitive Soul is, perhaps not improbably a moſt ſubtle nervous Spirit and Ætherial Eſſence, ting'd and conjoyn'd with one another, fit to receive and diſpenſe the Impulſes and Animations of the Mind, and in this may be the Aſſemblage of the Notices paſſing through and communicated by the Senſes. But as it is certainly Matter, tho' never ſo ſubtle, yet it may be as certainly diſorder'd as the Animal Oeconomy is diſorder'd; and from hence may ariſe Madneſs, and the like Diſcompoſures.

But as it is Matter, it is uncapable of beginning its own Motion, and alſo of Perception to Knowledge; and this is miſtaken for the other, whereas it is only the *Medium* by which the Harmonious Union is form'd.

But the Power in which are *Orignal Motion*, *Animation*, and *Perception* to Knowledge, as it thus LIVES AND ACTS WITH-

WITHOUT TOUCHING, OR BEING TOUCH'D, the Notion we form of it, is as utterly diveſted of all Matter, as the Portion of Space in a Vacuum: But what adequate Notion can we form of a Power acting FROM and TO Matter in Perception, and alſo in beginning Motion without *Contact?* We may indeed liken it to the Common Notion (not the Philoſophical one) of Sight, if we could alſo imagine Eye-ſight pervade all Bodies as it doth Glaſs; the Celerity and Extent are ſomewhat like this.

But here our Senſes evidently fail us, and we muſt be content to enumerate what Appearances we have to make our Concluſion, and not argue as may be done on the Magnet: The Magnetick Needle always inclines toward the *North*, but we can't ſee what can cauſe this Inclination, therefore it doth not ſo incline.

We may conceive this may be puniſh'd by Excluſion from greater Felicities, and forc'd into leſſer; and the manner of Confinement here to *five* Ways of Perception, to *four*, or *three*, may give us a Notion of ſomewhat like this; but there is no conceiving, that any Puniſhment ſhou'd tend to Annihilation: For the

the Intention of all Puniſhment is bettering and correcting the Offender, or to remove him from us, (as we do a Serpent, or ſome noxious Creature, who is capable of deſtroying us) but there is none of this in the Caſe, for the Being or Beings likely to puniſh, are not periſhable by it; and the moſt Cruel even of barbarous Men, wou'd not annihilate their Enemy, but (if poſſible) keep him in perpetual Torment; for Annihilation (if continuance of Torment was neceſſary) wou'd be an Eſcape and Deliverance from it; nor is the Annihilation conſiſtent with Wiſdom, be the Original or Creation how or what it will; beſides, it ſeems to be naturally endow'd with all the Properties of Preſervation of its Being, as *Science*, *Preſcience*, *Celerity*, *Pervaſion*, *not touchable* by any conceivable Force; ſo that in every Phyſical and Moral Conſideration, the IMMORTALITY is ſo far from being inconceivable, that the MORTALITY is utterly impoſſible to enter our Thoughts, or any Thing, but that it muſt be of Eternal Duration.

This I confeſs is carrying it to a greater length, and much beyond what we our ſelves cou'd have imagin'd; and in-

indeed is to be ſuſpected of a Fallacy ſomewhere or other, which at all Hazards ſhall not willingly be introduc'd here; the only way to diſcover it, is to ſtrip all this of its Gloſs, and conſider only as they ſtand to a naked View to Senſe.

The Matters of Fact relating to the Power and Nature of the Mind.

The great Capacity it exerts, and ſtrives to exert, beyond the Limits of the Body, the Difference of the Operations of Men and Brutes; though the Organs and Means are the ſame, the Efforts of the Deaf and Dumb in Reaſoning, and explaining their Reaſoning and Thoughts; the Preſcience by Dreams, and other inorganical Ways of Perception; and the Conformity of theſe common Ways with thoſe uncommon; the Difference there is in the Effects produc'd by Language, written or ſpoken, conveying Knowledge to the Taught, but none to the Untaught, tho' their Senſes are equally perfect, and alike exerted; the beginning Motion within our ſelves, without any external Touch to excite it, do ſhew Perception From Matter and Action To It, without Contact, thereby depriving us of all Means of

of conceiving it to be any more Matter, than a Portion of Space in a Vacuum; but that this conſcious, perceiving, acting Mind, is a Spirit, or living Perſonality, acting without the Body, to Foreknowledge, when its Organs and Senſes are at reſt and uſeleſs; that it is inattackable by any elementary Force, or tangible by any conceivable Matter, hath Science, Preſcience, Pervaſion, Celerity, and in every Reſpect capable of Self-Preſervation; nor in a moral Senſe can Puniſhment annihilate it, though it may deprive it of greater Felicities. And, as the Beings likely to puniſh it, are not periſhable by it, Annihilation wou'd be an Eſcape and Deliverance.

So that in all Phyſical and Moral Conſiderations, the *Morality* is inconceivable, or any Thing elſe; but that this conſcious living Perſonality muſt remain, and be of Eternal Duration.

The Manner how the Mind thus operates, the Means by which, its Original and Eſſence, and what Stations or Stations it will have after the Separation from the Body; whether it may occupy other Bodies groſs as this, or Aerial, or Ætherial, or whether any; the

the Felicities or Infelicities by which it may be puniſh'd or rewarded; what it may attain to, or degenerate it ſelf from; Theſe are not within our Perception: But we have as evident a Deficiency of a proper Senſe or Senſes for perceiving theſe, as a Deaf Man hath for Sounds, and more than the Blind hath for want of Sight: We ſee the Power, Force, Effects, Actions, and Communications, but with the Deaf know not the Means. Theſe are as utterly out of all Poſſibility of our conceiving (and muſt always remain ſo, till we have more than theſe common five Ways of Perception) as the Power, Effects, and ſome of the Faculties of this Mind, are within our Perception.

Thus have I endeavour'd, with ſtrict Care, to conclude no more from any one ſingle Appearance than what muſt unavoidably be pronounc'd on the View of it; and when we have alter'd the Term, on adding another to it, it is after the ſame manner as in Arithmetick: And if any Perſon hath an Objection, it muſt not conſiſt in Words, but in ſome Appearance to Senſe not yet occurring to us, which muſt be knowable,

knowable, and the Object of general Perception, and then the Concluſion is unavoidably again a general Determination; becauſe the Judgment is involuntary, and the way of expreſſing the Amount muſt be as natural as calling Two *Two*, or Three *Three*: But when they come to be conſider'd together, they are then call'd *Five*; if to this *Four* more be added, the Denomination changes again, and the Sum is *Nine*. So, if from Spirit and living Perſonality, not acting by Organs, nor of ſenſible Matter, nor liable to mortal Accidents, nor Moral Reaſon, or Phyſical, for Diſſolution, we have arriv'd to Non-materiality and not Mortality. I doubt it will be difficult to expreſs the whole Amount of theſe Facts and Appearances in any other Terms than by calling it an IMMORTAL SPIRIT.

CHAP.

Chap. VII.

And I may now preſume to expect, that nothing more is wanting to explain this manner of Argumentation, but what a little Application will make out: The firſt eaſie Rules of Arithmetick are not ſuppos'd to be receiv'd by Inſpiration, there muſt be ſome Endeavour, and ſuch who ſhall ſo endeavour may with Eaſe enough attain this way of diſcovering Truth; and a Method of Reaſoning concluſive and ſelf-evident as *Two* and *Two* make *Four*, or *Seventeen*, *Four*, and *Nineteen* make *Forty*.

And ſo far may this be carried, that though in moſt Caſes it is not needful to exert it to the ſtaring a Man in the Face, and asking him if he is not aſham'd to lye; yet, that it may be thus done, and a whole Synod hereby ſilenc'd, and depriv'd of the uſe of Words to vindicate themſelves, hath been prov'd in more than one Inſtance,

which ſhall nevertheleſs be repeated, and ſhew, that moſt of thoſe Caſes [eſpecially thoſe] which have caus'd ſo much Confuſion among Mankind, may be decided in an Advertiſement in a News-paper, and no *Argument* left them, but ſuch an one as an arm'd Highwayman may uſe againſt an unarm'd Traveller, who ſhall call him *Thief*, that is, *ſhoot him thro' the Head*; tho' the Highwayman knows as well as he, that he is a Thief, and on a proper Occaſion can call himſelf ſo.

For it is by the Amuſement of Authority that a Horſe is taught to draw, a Dog to fetch and carry, and a Man to believe; a Parrot is taught to ſpeak with leſs rigorous Uſage: They wou'd neither of 'em ſerve their Maſters at the Expence of their Liberty, had they the Knowledge and Uſe of Reaſon.

1. But there is no Law or Authority, Divine or Human, tho' of Force enough to make a Man utter theſe Words, (*viz.*) *Two and Two do make Six*, capable of making any Alteration in this *ſelf-evident Truth*, Two and Two make Four.

2. Nor

2. Nor can any Authority make a Man any other than a Lyar, who ſpeaks any thing contrary to apparent Common Senſe, or Conſcience; tho' the Law may have Power enough to excuſe his Cowardice, or defend his Knavery.

Is it an intelligible Truth, or Nonſenſe and Falſhood, to ſay, that a Perſon can be begotten of another Perſon, and deriv'd from him, and yet be without Beginning?

Now this Argument is at a full end, becauſe the Anſwer to this Queſtion is a *ſelf-evident Truth*, or a *ſelf-evident Lye*, and appears to every Man in the World the ſame.

Suppoſe the Perſon of whom we wou'd ask this Queſtion ſtanding before an Aſſembly of Men of Senſe, Honeſty, and Courage, and imagine the Confuſion he muſt be in at the demand of a direct Anſwer.

Here is no room for Evaſion; for, to tell them they don't underſtand the Word *Perſon*, or any other Term in the Queſtion, is affronting their Common Senſe, and like perſwading a Man he can't count Four; and to fly to Au-

thority (if any can be produc'd) is recurring on the two firſt Propoſitions.

As ſhort and unuſual as this Method of arguing may ſeem, all Diſputes muſt thus end, and be given over, when the Caſe is reduc'd to a ſelf-evident Concluſion. And if a Man will contend after this, he muſt be left to rave by himſelf, as one frantick and out of his Senſes, to add Words will only aggravate his Diſtemper; but when the Phrenzy is over, his own Reflections will convict him, whether he will confeſs it or no.

The Reaſon of this is, the INFALLIBLE and INVOLUNTARY Determination of the JUDGMENT, which appears when the Amuſement is remov'd: For, that Human Judgment is infallible, is a ſelf-evident and univerſal Truth; and this, we ſuppoſe, is what the Objectors mean when they ſay, this is no new Method of Reaſoning, but the old Method; and they have not ſaid more than what is contain'd in the Sentence that ſums up this whole Work, *Exert the* COMMON USE of *Common Senſe*. For, indeed, if every Man did not in ſome meaſure know and expect, that the *Judgment* muſt

muſt ſubmit to *Reaſon* when offer'd it, 'twon'd be moſt ridiculous to attempt to argue on any Thing.

And tho' it may be eaſie for theſe Objectors to find, as well as our ſelves, that the *Stoicks* and *Epicureans*, and ſome others, began on a good Foundation enough to argue from general Perception; and ſome of them, as well as moſt ingenious Perſons now, have gone ſo far as to own, that the Judgment is *Involuntary*; yet it would be difficult to find who ever made ſo much Uſe of this *Involuntary Judgment*, as to teach a Manner of arguing thereby to a general and ſelf-evident Determination in all Caſes.

Tho' without it Mankind cannot properly be ſaid to have arriv'd at MATURITY of Manly Age, for they have not the PERFECT USE of their Reaſon.

It is not eaſie to account for this great Deficiency; we have ſeen ſome Men argue on ſome Caſes, in this preſent Age, to the *Involuntary Judgment*; and the ſame Perſon, on other Occaſions, go directly againſt it.

Now, whether this proceeds from an Opinion, that it is not proper to teach Mankind the PERFECT USE of their Rea-

Reaſon; or, Whether it is really Ignorance, that it will not hold univerſally; whether through want of an eſtabliſh'd Rule, or Syſtem, of thus Reaſoning, and an Inſufficiency in themſelves to form one, or through Inſincerity, it matters not.

But too certain it is, that the World hath hitherto but been in its Juvenility (at beſt) and not yet attain'd to this *Maturity*, nor hath Mankind before now been ever taught the perfect and general Uſe of their *Reaſon*; and we need do no more to prove it, than give the grand Matter of Fact in Evidence; for Mankind cou'd never have been held ſo long under all theſe Miſeries, occaſion'd by different Opinions, if ſo certain a Way as this of attaining Truth had ever been diſcover'd to them.

And the Oppoſition this ſelf-evident Method meets with from Perſons at firſt, who at length are convinc'd, plainly ſhews the Novelty of it. We have had ſome very pleaſant Encounters of this nature, from ſome moſt violent Oppoſers, who have at laſt all fallen to an Aſſent by degrees, of the Neceſſity and Uſefulneſs of it; for the Rules are ſo ir-

irreſiſtibly plain and forcible, that an Approbation, ſo ſoon as the bigotted Paſſion is a little allay'd, is unavoidable.

For *'tis only*

Remove *the Amuſement, by throwing away* the Word BELIEVE; *conſider that the* Judgment is involuntary. *Reaſon not on Notions, but on Matters of Fact, and* Appearances to Senſe, *and* honeſtly report *what your Judgment dictates.*

CHAP. VIII.

BUT the Antagoniſts we have, at preſent to do with endeavour (notwithſtanding their Aſſent to theſe Rules) to keep up the grand Amuſement, That a *Miracle* may compel the Knowledge of a Thing not knowable by any other Means: For, they have admitted the throwing out the Word *Believe*, which renders their Sincerity to be ſuſpected, for the Abſurdity is too groſs after this.

How-

However, they are ringing a new Change upon the Words of the old Argument: Whether they will be ſo hardy as to appear in publick, I am not aſſur'd; but, as *This* is deſign'd for general Benefit, ſo, tho' the intelligent part of Mankind will immediately ſee the Sophiſtry, and the Intention of it, yet is it neceſſary here to obviate all that can be ſaid on this Caſe, or we are ſtill liable to the barbarous Impoſitions of a Sett of Men, who having once obtruded on the World an Opinion of their own Holineſs, never wanted Miracles to give a Sanction to whatever they have a mind to, tho' it were the Invaſion of every Man's Property, deſtroying the Peace of the World, and introducing amongſt Mankind all the dreadful Scenes of War and civil Diſcord.

1. Things not apparently Good in themſelves can't be recommended by a Miracle, they muſt be known to be good firſt, and without a Miracle.

If an apparent evil Doctrine was taught by a Miracle, the very ignorant *Indians* wou'd cry out, It was done by the evil *God* or the *Devil*.

So

So that the Impoſition is introduc'd afterward by Additions to the firſt Inſtitution, when the Authority is eſtabliſh'd by a plauſible Goodneſs at firſt, and ſupported collaterally by a Miracle. The *Miracle*, by this means, is not then ſtrictly examin'd after, and in proceſs of long time it cannot be queſtion'd but the *Doctrine* is STILL the ſame, and muſt FOR EVER anſwer to Reaſon for it ſelf.

2. *A Miracle can prove no more than it ſelf.* If it be debated, Whether a Romiſh Saint can raiſe a dead Man to Life, and he doth raiſe a dead Man to Life, the Argument is finiſh'd; but the next Word this ſuppos'd Saint ſaith afterward, may be an Error for all this. And if every Precept, Doctrine, and Word that he ſaid in his whole Life are really good, they do appear to *Reaſon*, every Word and Sentence, to be really good, without regarding the *Miracle*. But if in his whole Life he hath ſaid one only Sentence containing an Error, or is trifling, that Sentence appears to be an Error, and is trifling to *Reaſon*; and all the Authority of the *Miracle*, nor an Hundred more of 'em, no, nor his

own Sanctity of Life, and never ſaying an ill thing before, can make any alteration in the Determination of Reaſon on this: And if 'tis bad, it muſt be admitted to be ſo call'd; and 'tis a wicked (or cowardly) Falſity to ſay otherwiſe.

3. *One Miracle can't prove another.* A preternatural Thing only reported, not ſeen, can't be prov'd on the Aſſertion of a Perſon working another Miracle to teſtifie it.

A Mountebank may ſay, he hath receiv'd a Charm from an Angel to cure a Diſtemper, and he may cure the Diſtemper by the Charm; but this doth not prove that he receiv'd it from an Angel, for he might obtain it by other means.

And therefore their *Chevalier* may pretend he is the Son of ſuch a Man, and to prove it, may produce a hundred Perſons to teſtifie he hath cur'd them of Diſtempers by Touching, yet this makes but a poor Argument in *Great Britain*, to thoſe who think they have Natural Reaſons againſt it. And if the Inſufficiency of ſuch Miracle-Teſtimony was not univerſally known as well to the oppoſite Party, there

there would not be wanting enough of thoſe to the Purpoſe, even, it may be, raiſing the Dead to Life by Touching. We know their Church to be prolifick in ſuch Productions, and Ten thouſand People, or whole Cities, might be brought with eaſe enough, between Deception and Authority, to teſtifie them: And they may be enter'd on Record, and in proceſs of Time no Perſon capable of diſcovering the Deluſion. Laws might paſs to defend it, and a Man may be hang'd Seventy Years hence for oppoſing it.

But this wou'd not prove, that his Conception and Birth was the Conſequence of the Invocation of Saints; nor would it make any Alteration in the Caſe; for it is an irreſiſtible Truth, That tho' a Perſon may, in many Caſes, have a Right to the Eſtate of his Predeceſſor, yet there is no native Right for one Man more than another, to aſſume Dominion over any People contrary to the general Conſent, Peace, and Benefit of that People.

4. To pretend to *Believe* a Thing on the working of a Miracle, is a *ſtupid* and *gaping Aſtoniſhment*, and not receiving

it into the Underſtanding by Apprehenſion and Judgment.

5. To work a Miracle to induce a Man to any WORDS or ACTIONS, through Fear or Authority, is ſtifling the Operation of his Reaſon, by which that VERY ACTION, and all others, ARE, in ſpite of the utmoſt efforts of his own Will, JUDG'D, APPROV'D, or CONDEMN'D, both at the preſent, and for ever hereafter, as often as they are in View of it. For,

6. This is the Eternal Reaſon of all Things, by which GOD himſelf determines his own Actions; and if ever Man is call'd to Account before any Juſt Judge, 'tis this UNIVERSAL REASON is the LAW by which he muſt be Try'd; and he muſt ſhew how he hath uſed thoſe Excellent Faculties given him, and not thoſe he never had.

CHAP.

Chap. IX.

HOwever unhappy ſome Countries may be, that the teaching People the Uſe and Authority of their Reaſon may be detrimental to the Peace of the Government, we are Here in much more fortunate Circumſtances, inſomuch that as the Senſe of our Liberty is more known to us, ſo much more are we incited to a Deſire of ſupporting and ſtrengthening the preſent Conſtitution which defends it. Nor hath there been any Artifice more dangerous to the State, than that wicked, impious one, of impoſing on the Common Senſe of the People, by telling them theſe Liberties we contend for are dangerous to their Salvation; nor any Treaſon more miſchievous, than the promoting Bigotry.

If Youth were firſt inſtructed into a Way of arguing, in every Caſe, to nothing but *Univerſal Truth*, by reducing

all Diſputes to a *General Determination*, and *ſelf-evident* Concluſion, before they were introduc'd to the learning of any Science or Faculty, ſuch Abuſe on the Dignity of Human Nature cou'd not be impos'd on the World.

Therefore, if there are any Perſons who would diſtinguiſh themſelves in promoting the general Benefit and Happineſs of Mankind, the Liberties we now enjoy, and for ever prevent the Impoſition of arbitrary Religion, the only Way that Tyranny and Slavery can be introduc'd, let 'em exert themſelves, in teaching the Uſe of *Common Senſe* after ſome ſuch practicable Method as is here offer'd. The Benefit being ſo evident, and carrying ſuch immediate Conviction with it, there requires little more than the bringing it to Peoples ſight.

When this is done, and Men ſee the Power of Reaſon above all Authority, and the Neceſſity of uſing it, the Buſineſs is effected; for if a Sort of Men ſhould endeavour again at New Authority, or to exert Old, againſt general *Common Senſe* and *ſelf-evident Truth*, they wou'd not know where to begin it, or mention it, without meeting with Contempt

tempt and Ridicule at beſt; and the inſiſting on it too far, wou'd bring on them the Effects of ſuch Reſentment, as Men of true Senſe and Honour always ſhew, when they find themſelves impos'd on by Lyars and Impoſtors.

For when People have been exercis'd a little while in this Method of Reaſoning, and diſcerning Truth, a Lye in Religion and Politicks will be as univerſally evident, and conſequently as ſcandalous and offenſive, as any Lye or Cheat in Commerce or Converſation; and Authority that ſupports them muſt inſenſibly loſe its Force, and ceaſe.

Chap. X.

WE have had great Complaint and Reproofs from our preſent Objectors, and others, for vindicating Religion, only (as they ſay) becauſe it is the Religion of our Country. The Phraſe, *Religion of our Country*, gives them great Offence.

We have alſo, ſometimes a contemptible Sneer and Ridicule, for ſaying, That the Religion taught in our Country hath a deeper Foundation in Nature and Reaſon than they are aware of.

Now, tho' theſe two Parties are diametrically oppoſite to one-another, yet one Anſwer ſhall ſerve 'em both, and we will come nearer the Point than ever we did yet.

He, whoſe Protection we claim, as the Author of the Religion of our Country, and whoſe Denomination it bears, did, in a particular manner, inculcate the

the Religion of his Country, in ſeveral remarkable Caſes; as, in his moſt ſolemn Sermon in the Mount, healing the Lepers, and ſome others, and taught no other Way of worſhiping GOD, but what was agreeable to the Laws and Cuſtoms of his Country before he was born. The Immortality of the Soul was by him taken for granted, was taught by two Sects of Philoſophers, and generally receiv'd long before, tho' there was a Party againſt it.

What he moſt eſpecially recommended, was, That he came purpoſely to put them in a Way of delivering their immortal Souls from the Miſeries they might incurr in a future State.

His Morality was alſo general, and ſuch as no good or wiſe Man, in any part of the World, would have objected againſt.

And ſince it hath been deſir'd, we will here ſhew, how *Pythagoras*, from his manner of Thinking, might reaſonably be imagin'd to fall into the Notion of the Trinity.

To conſider the Divine Exiſtence as one only ſingle Being, Spirit, or Act, without any Adjunct belonging to it,

pro-

proceeding from it, or operating by it, or with it, is an imperfect Idea, leaving the Mind in an indiſtinct Amuſement, without Satisfaction, becauſe it is not adequate to the Obſervations we make of his being an active Agent. Now we can't conceive this of a Spirit, without ſomething to act on, by, or with; its being like one ſingle Sound, which is no Muſick of it ſelf, tho' from an Inſtrument, any more than that of a Gun or Anvil: No Sound is Muſick, but as it acts with, or hath relation to others.

To bring this original Sound into Muſick, *another* muſt be found; but here is ſtill no Harmony nor Concord, but Diſcord; nor are they of any Uſe to one another till the *Third* is found, and then there is a Muſical Harmony produc'd: And here is the Origin of all Muſical Compoſitions, from the placing of this *Third* nearer or farther off from the Second, is the Affection of the Compoſition allotted: The *Firſt* is the Original, and alſo the End, but the *Third* is the Spirit by which the Spritelineſs or Graveneſs is determin'd.

We

We have thus found a Power capable of producing Muſick, but there is none perform'd; the Syſtem is not compleat until the *Diateſſaron* is finiſh'd, which is by adding the next natural Note to the former, and then Muſick may be ſaid to be created; for all the reſt after this may be properly call'd *generating*, it being no other than Repetition, and producing Variety out of the Matter already form'd.

For all the upper part of the ſame *Diapaſon* is no other than another *Diateſſaron*, the ſame with the firſt, which places it ſelf by the Concord *Diapente*, and thereby giving a natural Meaſure for the Diſtance of Notes. And this *Diapente* and *Diateſſaron* are interchangeably *Diateſſaron* and *Diapente* to the upper and lower Notes of the *Diapaſon*, which is but the ſame *one* Note repeated, and call'd for Diſtinction ſake an Eighth.

And thus we ſee that the Original Sound, which we now call the Key-Note, is not only the beginning of the Compoſition, and gave Birth to it, but is the univerſal Spirit of the whole, and of every Part of it; the *Centre* TO which every Note tends, and FROM which they

they have their Name, Place, and Relation, the *Uniformity* BY which alone it cou'd be Muſick, and the End TO which, and in which all finiſh, and are reſolv'd.

And this ſingle Sound, of which we cou'd perceive no Power of acting to produce Muſick by it ſelf, when we find it in Relation with a *Second* and *Third* in concert with them, is capable of acting as Principal to Infinity, as well in Variety, and without number of Changes of Notes, as in meaſure of Time.

There are ſome ſtrange Magical Properties, Effects, and Operations of Muſick which are real, if they were rightly ſought after; for the acting of thoſe combin'd Sounds produce and find out one another: Alſo their various Kinds of Verberation cauſe various Modes of Concuſſion, and conſequently differing Effects from differing Motion of lax and ductile Bodies; and likewiſe on more ſolid Things, which, by their Elaſtick Property, are capable of Vibration.

If we conſider, that this Syſtem of Muſick, and the Laws of Concord and Diſcord, their Effects, and Proportion of

of the Notes are natural, tho' the Diſcovery and Uſe is artificial; we may be apt to imagine there was more Uſe made of this, than barely to illuſtrate a Conception: But be this as it will, it was very uſeful to our Divine Philoſopher; for by this means he form'd to himſelf a bright Notion of the Original Divine Unity, and Power of the Trinity, and Creation of the Univerſal *Diateſſaron*, which he call'd *The Myſtery of Four*; and alſo an Idea of the Omnipreſence and Univerſality of GOD, adequate to the Obſervations he had before made of his Providence over all Things, as well as his being the Author of all Things.

We have thus ſeen this Great Man thinking, and I can't help purſuing him a little further; and imagine, after he had attain'd to this agreeable Knowledge of the Paternal Dominion, Providence, and Omnipreſence of the Deity, and Immortality of the Soul, and the Political Pleaſure and Happineſs of a Moral Life: If any had deſir'd him to have inſtructed them how to addreſs themſelves to GOD; if he had liv'd ſome Ages after, and heard a certain Form beginning with a very *Pythagorean*

gorean (that is, a rational) Phraſe, *Our Father*, I can't think he wou'd have alter'd, added, or diminiſh'd one Sentence of it: How ſoon, and after what manner, Innovations and Errors crept into a Religion ſo well and naturally founded, let thoſe whoſe Buſineſs it is conſider. All we deſire of them is, they wou'd for ſhame ceaſe impoſing on us ſuch Things as make it ſcandalous to vindicate them.

For, how can a Man of Senſe, and Courage enough to be Honeſt, ſit in a free Converſation, and impoſe an Abſurdity on his Friend as evidently falſe as Two and Two make Six, becauſe Authority will protect him, without the juſt Imputation of being a cowardly Fool, or a deſigning Knave?

Religion not agreeable to the Law of the Country, demonſtrates a great Defect as well as Immorality, either in the Religion or Law.

Neither can they conſiſt in Oppoſition to one another in the ſame place, without the gréateſt Confuſion; and therefore Religion can be no other than agreeable to the Laws of the Country, and Alterations muſt be made to bring them

them together, where it hath happen'd otherwiſe.

'Tis very imprudent to do any thing that may introduce Contempt of Religion, for moſt Countries are induc'd to a Regularity of Manners, which they look on as requir'd by their Religion; this is an Awe upon them, from which they muſt not be diſturb'd, for the Conſequence wou'd be Diſorder and Prophaneneſs.

The groſs of Mankind cannot be brought to determine what is proper for themſelves, and one Scheme (tho' a faulty one) muſt not be broke to pieces till another is fit to be introduc'd, and the People fit to receive it: This is a Work of long Time, and many Hands.

It may be proper for every Man that is duly qualified, to take a prudential Method of inſtructing People, and reforming their Publick, as well as Private Errors; for, without this, there wou'd be no Improvement: But the doing Good is to be the End of all his Actions.

To

To exert a ſuperiour Capacity in diſtracting Mens Minds, and diſturbing the Peace of their Country, by abrupt Innovations, is very great Immorality; and however ſuch Perſon may ſhew a great deal of Knowledge, he wou'd diſcover but little Wiſdom; for, all Great and Wiſe Men ever did, and ever will reverence the Religion of their Country, and teach to worſhip GOD agreeable to the Laws thereof.

A DISSERTATION ON *Liberty* and *Neceſſity.*

JUST after the preceding Sheets were finiſh'd, the Author had the following Propoſition ſent him; from whence a Concluſion is ſuppos'd to be drawn, That Man is not a free Agent, but all his Actions are Neceſſary.

Every Effect hath a ſufficient Cauſe, every ſufficient Cauſe muſt produce its Effect.

This, as it there ſtands, is not general, but ambiguous, and may be equally argued to both ſides of the Queſtion; for, as it is, it determines nothing, but muſt have ſomething added to it, to explain it, or indeed to render it intelligible;

telligible; therefore it may be thus underſtood:

Every Effect hath a ſufficient Cauſe, every Man's Will is a ſufficient Cauſe, which muſt produce its Effect.

Or, on the contrary,

A Man's Actions are Effects produc'd by ſome ſufficient Cauſe; the Power of the Mind, call'd *Reſolution*, (or what is commonly call'd *Will*) to do an Action is not a ſufficient Cauſe of that Effect, but this Power muſt have another ſufficient Cauſe to produce that Effect [*Power*]

Or thus,

Every Effect is ſucceſſive to ſome firſt ſufficient Cauſe; every firſt ſufficient Cauſe muſt produce an Effect ſucceſſive.

Or, again on the contrary,

Every Effect is produc'd by ſome ſufficient Cauſe, which ſufficient Cauſe is the Effect of ſome other ſufficient Cauſe, and that of another, and ſo on to Infinity.

So alſo may be ſaid of GOD's Actions, they are the Effect of his Will, his Will the Effect of judging it Good, that the Effect of perceiving it ſo, *&c.*

For it follows not, that becauſe every Effect muſt have a Cauſe, that therefore

fore every Motion muſt have a Cauſe.

There muſt be ſome Motion that is No Effect at all, or there is no ſuch Thing as beginning of Motion, or Motion.

So that the Propoſition *ſeems to contain nothing at all but a* Jingle *of Words; however, we ſhall proceed to what is meant by it, or infer'd from it, tho' it is not contain'd in it; and ſince Words give ſo little Satisfaction, we will ſee what* Matters of Fact *and* Appearances to Senſe *we can find relating to the Caſe.*

Human Actions are Motions, which are the Effect of ſome ſufficient Cauſe.

The Mind of Man is ſufficient to produce the Effect [Motion in Man.]

This Mind hath the intelligent Faculties, Apprehenſion, Judgment, and Reſolution.

Man is an intelligent Agent, ſtanding in the midſt of a thouſand Objects, which Objects he Perceives, Judges, and Reſolves on.

Perception is according to the Object, neceſſary, paſſive, and involuntary; Judgment according to Perception, neceſſary, paſſive, and involuntary. *(Or thus)*

All Things are as they are, and the Senſes make no Alteration in perceiving them; the Judgment determines on them as Perception ſees them; that is to ſay, the Things ſeen, Perception of *it*, and Determination of the Judgment on *that*, are conſtantly the ſame, neceſſarily depending on one another, and unalterably continue the ſame, whether an Action be done, or not done.

A clear Diſtinction muſt be obſerv'd here, that the perceiving a Thing to be what it is, and not another Thing, is *neceſſary*: The Faculty of *Apprehenſion* is not produc'd by the Object, as it is *neceſſary*, that the Eye muſt ſee a Thing Red, that is Red, if it ſees it at all, and can't ſee it Green; but a Man hath the Senſe of ſeeing whether he ſees that Object or any other, ſo *that* eſpecial Sentence or Determination of the Judgment is *neceſſary* on Perception; but the Faculty call'd *Judgment* is inherent in the Mind, whether it had judg'd on that Object or no: And the ſame may be ſaid of *Reſolution*.

Reſolution follows next in order after Judgment; Action is produc'd by Reſolution. (*Query*) Doth this *Reſolution* depend

depend on the *Judgment*, as the *Judgment* doth on *Perception*?

[*A.*] The Determination or Information from the Judgment, whether a Thing is good or bad, juſt or unjuſt, and conſequently proper to be done or not done, *is Paſſive*; and this is the ſame in all Practical Propoſitions, as well as Speculative, for 'tis a Man's involuntary Opinion of his own Actions, and of every Thing which is propos'd to him. In a Speculative Propoſition we can chuſe whether we will reſolve to *report* truly what the *Judgment* dictates; and in a Practical one, we can chuſe whether we will reſolve to *act* according to what the *Judgment* dictates: That is, in one ſhort Sentence, WE CAN TELL A LYE, in Oppoſition to the *Judgment*, and the Organs of Speech will obey a *Reſolution* ſo to do, and utter the Words.

[*B.*] Actions are done according to the laſt *Determination*, *Approbation*, *Pleaſure*, *Will*, *Choice*, or RESOLUTION of the Mind (call it which Name you pleaſe) for this laſt *Determination* (or rather *Reſolution*) of the Mind is the beginning of Motion, and without which there

there is no Motion: *Judgment* is the next immediate preceding Faculty of the Mind in an orderly Courſe before *Reſolution*: The LAST RESOLUTION of this intelligent Mind, is, an *immediate preceding* SUFFICIENT CAUSE of the Action's being done. This *Reſolution* hath not a natural Attachment and Dependance on the *Judgment*, as the *Judgment* hath on *Perception*; nor is there any Defect, or other Cauſe, neceſſarily inherent in Man, nor any external Thing, Matter, or Agent, nor a ſuperior BEING capable of being the Author of Nature, that by any Fore-ordination, mediate or immediate Action or Direction, doth or hath forcibly impell'd a Neceſſity for Man to tell a Lye; but it is the pure and only Effect of the Power and Choice of his Mind in WILLING and RESOLVING ſo to do.

The laſt Determination or Reſolution of the Mind is never neceſſarily attach'd to the Judgment, ſometimes agreeable to it; as in good and wiſe Actions, in bad and fooliſh ones always againſt it, or without it: For, if a Man always follow'd the Dictates of his Judgment, his Acti-

Actions muſt be all good, for this is right Reaſon.

The Apprehenſion ſees ſeveral Things in the Propoſition of an Action good and evil, if they are really in it; and on the Sight of Objects very often ariſe *Deſires*, *Paſſions*, and *Appetites*, and to thoſe do ſometimes ſucceed great Commotions in the Body; but they have no Force to produce Actions. No Action is without the *Will*, except in Madneſs. Anger and Luſt are not Murder and Rape, without a *Reſolution* to commit them; and the Sentence of the Judgment is but *one* determining it to be proper or improper to do the Action, as the Good and Bad outweigh one another.

And the chuſing a leſſer Good, and leaving an apparent greater, is running on a Precipice with the Eyes open (according to the Degree of it) but too often we find this to be done, and Evil is choſe, knowing it to be Evil.

Many are the Miſeries Mankind incurr by thus doing, but they bring 'em on themſelves; for this Judgment is a ſafe and able Conductor, to lead them to avoid thoſe Miſeries, if they wou'd follow it.

And

And this is all which I think neceſſary to be ſaid in the Caſe, for the Satisfaction of any ſincere and impartial Enquirer after Truth.

The two Paragraphs mark'd [A] [B] *are ſuppos'd to be a full Amount of the whole Proceſs, and every Matter of Fact relating thereunto; and by the Choice of Expreſſion, is endeavour'd to keep up the Force of every material Objection: And if the Sum of theſe are a Concluſion,* (*as 'tis hoped they are*) *it is no other than the natural Amount of univerſal Appearances, and conſequently an Irreſiſtible, General, and Self-evident Determination, to any Perſon capable of underſtanding the Terms of it, and comparing them.*

But as there is not ſuch another Intricate Amuſement, which hath confounded the Underſtanding of ſome otherwiſe Ingenious Men, I ſhall endeavour to diſcover how this Confuſion is produc'd, and the Remedy.

Suppoſe a Rape, or ſome Bad Action, to be done, in the Propoſition of this Caſe there are ſeen ten Evils, and one Good.

1. The

1. The Judgment *determines* it to be Bad, and of ill Conſequence, and not proper to be done.

2. There is a ſecond *Determination*, That it is for preſent Pleaſure, and a ſmall Good to do it.

3. There is a third *Determination* of the Mind ariſing on a Debate, Whether to prefer the doing it for the leſſer Good, or letting it alone for the greater Good: The Action is reſolv'd on, and done by this laſt *Determination* of the Mind, in purſuance of the Second, in preference to the Firſt, and in oppoſition to it; but the Firſt remains ſtill the ſame, before and after the Action, and during the Execution of it; the Second doth not outweigh the Firſt, or obliterate it.

We will now look for a preceding neceſſary or firſt ſufficient Cauſe of the third *Determiaation*, to throw this bad Action on: But here we meet immediately with ill Succeſs at our firſt ſetting out; for the firſt *Determination* ſtands in the midſt of the Way, and encounters us with a fierce and oppoſing Aſpect, ſtaring us in the Face which way ſoever we turn, and the Force of the Argument comes double upon us.

It ſhews you, That no *Judgment*, tho' ever ſo ſtrong, can cauſe any Action, for the weakeſt (if any) hath carried it here; and alſo, That the Second is only an Amuſement, and is ſo far from outweighing or eraſing the Firſt, that it is entirely conquer'd by that Firſt; which *determines*, that the very chuſing a leſſer Good, or an Evil, and leaving a greater, is Folly: And this is the conſtant Dictates of it, inſomuch as to take away part of the propos'd Pleaſure, and inſtead of being extinguiſh'd or overcome by this Second, it is encreas'd by that Second, is ſtronger in its Teſtimony, during the inſtantaneous Motion of Action, and ſtronger afterward than before; nor can Inattention help, but as often as the Action it ſelf is in View or Remembrance, this *Sentence* of the *Judgment* continues forcibly to condemn it.

The Confuſion is caus'd here by the indiſtinct Uſe of the Word *Determination*, in three different Operations of the Mind: The Remedy is, ſtrike out all the Paragraph Number 2. (*call'd the ſecond Determination*) for 'tis no other than a ranging of the ſeveral Parts of the propos'd Thing, or practical Propoſition to the Apprehenſion, and is in Nature and Reality

Reality before Judgment; in this APPREHENSION there is a Perception of ten Evils, and one Good, and the JUDGMENT (to which alone belongs the Word *Determination*) *determines* it to be ten times better to let it alone, than to do it. In Number 3, call the laſt Power of the Mind (which is the beginning of Motion) RESOLUTION, and obliterate the Word *Determination*, confining it only to the Judgment in Number 1, and the Caſe is clear, and you have adequate Terms to expreſs the whole Proceſs, and to form diſtinct Conceptions with.

The fallacious manner of Reaſoning, by chaining together Things and Ideas which have, or ſeem to have, a Sequence from one-another, tho' they are not at all naturally attach'd together, contributes not a little to this Error.

But ſtill further to obviate this in as many different Ways as Men may differently expreſs themſelves, and think on it:

A Man commits a Rape, becauſe he *ſaw* REASONS to gratifie his Inclinations; and theſe *Reaſons*, he ſays, outweigh'd at that time the *Reaſons* of his Conſcience and Judgment againſt it.

This alſo we admit to be true; for ſince he chuſes to call it *Reaſons*, we will call it ſo too, and ſay as well as he, That if theſe Reaſons had not outweigh'd the Reaſons of his Conſcience or Judgment, the Action cou'd not have been done; but theſe Reaſons, as he calls 'em, are the firſt and only ſufficient Cauſe of the Action's being done, and are attach'd to nothing which goes before 'em, for the immediate Motion, Operation, or Faculty going before them is the Judgment (or, as he expreſſes it, *Reaſons of the Judgment*) to which theſe *Reaſons* of Action are diametrically oppoſite, and (to keep up his own Allegory) theſe Reaſons put in the Scale againſt thoſe of Judgment, do not outweigh them, but are evidently ten times too light; and 'tis the RESOLUTION to do the Action, which is voluntarily put into the Scale, which outweighs and turns the Ba'ance, and doth the Action.

And the Fallacy is here again, only in confounding the Underſtanding, by applying the Word *Reaſons* to two different and even oppoſite Meanings.

So again, you may change the Word, and ſay, the MOTIVE to do the Action was ſtronger at the time of doing it than

than the *Motive* of the Judgment against it: Yet ſtill this *Motive* is a *ſelf-moving* Motive, impel'd by nothing that precedes it, but in Oppoſition as before; for theſe *Motives*, on either ſide, do nothing toward puſhing on the Action, or not puſhing it on; and if they did, the Judgment muſt puſh with ten times the Force, becauſe 'tis ten to one againſt it; but 'tis the RESOLUTION voluntarily added to this one *Motive* which puſhes on the Action.

We have all this while taken no notice of the Abſurdity of looking for a *firſt ſufficient Cauſe* to force or impel this Mind, it being too ridiculous ſeriouſly to think on; for after they have chain'd the *Will* to the Judgment, and that to Perception, and that to the Object, they have not told us where we muſt go next for a *ſufficient Cauſe*; or if they attach *Reſolution* to an Appetite, and that to Perception, and ſo to the Object, we are at the ſame loſs.

But to talk of an Appetite's producing Action forcibly, is ſo ſcandalous and apparent a Falſity againſt every Day's Experience, that it is an Affront to any Man of Senſe to expect he can imagine it: For tho' an Appetite doth

ariſe on the ſight of a proper Object, and ſtrong Emotions are excited, as in Anger and Luſt, yet ſo far is this from producing the Actions without the Will, that it is giving a true Deſcription of MADNESS.

That is, the Body, its Members and Fluids, are in ſuch a Diſorder by ſome Diſeaſe, as to be out of the Command of the Mind; it cannot operate with them, they move involuntarily on the firſt Diſcompoſure that cauſes an Agitation, like the Hand in a Palſie.

And from hence 'tis *Matter of Fact*, be the Conſequence what it will, That the Actions of Children and Brutes *are not Neceſſary*. Therefore is it, when they offend with their Wills, we correct and puniſh them, if we can; and when their Actions are NECESSARY, and not at the diſpoſal of their Wills, to ſecure our ſelves, we ſeparate them from us: An Hoſpital for the Man, and a Halter for the Dog.

As to thoſe who amuſe themſelves with *Liberty being impoſſible, becauſe all Things muſt have a Beginning*, this evidently ariſes from a Prepoſſeſſion, that the Mind of Man is not an intelligent Agent; or, indeed, that Man cannot

not begin his own Motions; and a Reſolution to oppoſe every thing, whether Matter of Fact or Argument, that tends towards diſcovering the Immortality of the Soul; and without accounting for it on this manner, we could not make common Senſe of ſuch an Aſſertion (nor ſcarce with it) for there is no Relation or Connection with, *Liberty is impoſſible*, and *all Things muſt have a Beginning*. And they might as well ſay, *Every Thing muſt have a Beginning, therefore the Wine is good.*

All Human Actions *have* their Beginning, and whatever hath a Beginning muſt have a ſufficient Cauſe to give them a Beginning.

The Beginning of Human Action is from the Reſolution of the intelligent Mind, and this is a ſufficient neceſſary Cauſe, to produce the Beginning of Motion and Action.

But it follows not, that becauſe this intelligent Agent can begin its own Motions, that it can begin its own Exiſtence.

A General is made ſo from his Prince; but ſuch General will think it unjuſt if he doth not triumph for his Victories as for his own good Actions; or if he ſhou'd prove a Traytor, he wou'd be

condemn'd for it, as for his own bad Actions.

And the only Way for theſe to get over this Amuſement, is to conſider what an apparent Matter of Fact this Caſe is againſt their receiv'd Hypotheſis, (viz. *That the* Mind *is not an* Intelligent Agent, *but mortal and material*) and begin to doubt of *that*, and then in all probability they will fall into a different manner of Thinking.

There is no End in purſuing an Argument, as long as ſome People will find Sounds and Syllables to aſſemble together, and confound themſelves, and one another.

Beſides, one wou'd think there ſhould nced no Anſwer to a Perſon, who, with a ſerious Countenance, ſhall ſay, You oppoſe me when I tell you, *Three times Nine* is *Twenty-nine*, when the common Light of Nature hath told all Mankind, that *Three times Three is Nine*. Is not this exactly ſuch a Jingle as ſaying, The common Light of Nature hath told all Mankind, that *there cannot be an Effect without a Cauſe* *, and to infer from hence, That all

* *Diogenes*'s firſt Letter in the *Britiſh Journal*, Dec. 29.

all Mens Actions are neceſſary? And when he finds that this muſt run to Infinity, and the Actions of GOD muſt alſo be neceſſary, then he leaves his Propoſition, and excepts GOD, and ſays, Every Cauſe muſt be the Effect of ſome Superiour, till we arrive at a ſelf-exiſtent Being. But afterwards perceiving that this muſt make GOD the Author of Man's Unjuſt Actions, he flies to the laſt Refuge, and reſolves all into Admiration and Submiſſion to ever adorable MYSTERY †, and tells us plainly we know not what Juſtice or Injuſtice, Good or Evil, is: And when he hath perſwaded Men that they neither know Good from Evil, nor can chuſe it if they did know it, That we know not whether GOD is juſt or no, he comes in with Reveal'd Religion, (tho' with what conſiſtency is too evident, however I ſhall not point at that) and ſays, GOD hath told us All, and more than is neceſſary to be known, and the reſt is *Myſtery*, with which we muſt be contented, and pry no farther, for we know not GOD's Reaſons: And if we did know them, could

† Letter II.

could we judge of them? But he affirms, they are certainly juſt and reaſonable; and he leaves us without any further Shift, which is too ſoon, and not very fair, for he ſhou'd have communicated the Authority he has for telling us Things are juſt and reaſonable, which he knows nothing of; or if he hath a peculiar Way of knowing Things not knowable, he ſhould give ſome Account of it.

The Reaſon why I have choſen this Author more than another, is, to recommend him to be read carefully, and compar'd with himſelf, as a moſt proper Way of diſcovering the Abſurdities which accompany this Notion of *Neceſſity*. And I think he hath with leſs Art than ſome others, conceal'd and evaded the jarring Inconſiſtencies.

There are ſome Perſons who, I find, are amus'd with the Caſe, yet admit not of the given *Propoſition*; they ſee *that* to be inconcluſive and fallacious, but look on it as unskilfully form'd. Now theſe Perſons want no more to convince them than to collect their own Thoughts, and frame for themſelves a *Propoſition* peculiarly adapted to it, and the whole Abſurdity will immediately appear: For no

no *Propoſition* more general, or more concluſive, was ever, or can ever be form'd on it, it being in it ſelf oppoſite to ſuch familiar and evident Matter of Fact; and whoever ſets about the forming it into a conſiſtent *Propoſition*, will never be able to bring it forth: And it will readily appear to ſuch Perſons, that this intricate Amuſement hath no other Foundation than that *very ſame* Propoſition, entire as it is, or the Contents of it fallaciouſly ſeparated, and diſtantly predicated on, and inſinuated, or ſuchlike ſophiſtical wording the Thing, without *any* collected Propoſition.

For the *Fallacy* lies not where they think it is, but in the very Word EFFECT, or any ſuchlike ſynonimous Term they expreſs themſelves in: And the Error is inſenſibly conjur'd up by this Word EFFECT; for the *Will* chuſing in Sequence, ſometimes according to the Judgment which precedes, and ſometimes after an Appetite which precedes *that*, and this Choice being call'd *Effect*, the Tranſition to a neceſſary Effect ſlides unwarily into the Underſtanding: Whereas this Choice is No EFFECT at all, nor hath Judgment or Appetite any Force or Power to impel an Effect; but the

the Will or Reſolution chuſes ſometimes againſt the ſtrongeſt Judgment, and ſometimes againſt the ſtrongeſt Appetite, and ſometimes agreeable to either of them.

And this is the Reaſon no general Propoſition can be made of the Caſe, becauſe no Man can ſay in general, that the Will doth ALWAYS follow the Judgment, or ALWAYS follow the Appetite; nor hath he the Name of any other preceding ſufficient Cauſe, to put into a Propoſition, without apparently abuſing his own and every body's Common Senſe.

And from hence it is that this Aſſertion, That *Human Actions are neceſſary*, is full as abſurd as Tranſubſtantiation; and we are, after all this tedious Enquiry, arriv'd to a wonderful height of Philoſophy indeed; that is, to be upon a level with every Man in the World that can't write nor read, but who, not being amus'd by learned Subtilties, looks no farther than native Common Senſe to tell him, that he wills and chuſes his own Actions, ſometimes againſt his Conſcience, and ſometimes according to it; ſometimes againſt his Paſſions, and ſometimes according to them. And if

ſuch

ſuch a Man had Fortitude to overcome the Awe uſually upon him, of Submiſſion to one who appears his Superiour in Learning, it muſt be as ſurprizing to him to hear a Man tell him, his Actions are not his own, nor he is not anſwerable to his own Conſcience, or any other way for 'em, as to ſay, Two and Two make Six.

And the greateſt Myſtery in it is, that it ſhould be poſſible for Men of Learning, capable of Reflection, to jingle ſuch grating Sounds and Conceptions together, and not hear the Diſcord, and perceive the Oppoſition.

And as it thus appears to be Matter of Fact, that *Man is a Free Agent, and the Author of his own Actions*, ſo ought it to be reported, and maintain'd with Fortitude, be the Conſequence what it will.

Truth muſt be taken for its own ſake, and it is cowardly Scepticiſm to ſhrink from it for fear ſome hated or frightful Conſequence ſhould be attach'd to it; and whoever cannot ſurmount *this* Puſillanimity, will never arrive at a true MANLY Underſtanding.

We

We have, as yet, not mention'd any *Conſequence*, becauſe we would neither be terrified out of one ſide of the Queſtion by any diſagreeable *Conſequence*, nor alur'd to the other ſide by any pleaſing one.

We come now to conſider the *Conſequences*, and ſee if ſome of theſe which are repreſented after a very terrible manner, are not real Matter of Fact in in themſelves, be the precedent Caſe true or falſe, and the others nothing but bugbear Phantoms, the Effects of Fear and Half-thinking.

And here, as before, we ſhall take no Notice of thoſe Perſons who are very expert at compromiſing and compounding a Thing, and can evade and diſtinguiſh away the propos'd Matter, till no body can tell, nor themſelves neither, which ſide of the Argument they are of; theſe are the fitteſt Antagoniſts for one another.

The firſt *Conſequence* we meet with, is, That if Man is the Author of his own Actions, then G O D is not the Author of them, either by any *Decree*, *Fore-ordination*, *mediate* or *immediate Direction*.

And

And is there any thing more evident than this, That no (Murder, or any) unjuſt Action could be done, if a Being ſo wiſe, perfect, and powerful, as to be the Author of the Univerſe, was, by any Means, the Author of Mens Actions, but the Sword muſt be arreſted in the Hand of the Murtherer?

The Preſcience of GOD and Spirits can be no other than Intuition, Knowledge, and Sagacity.

Intuition, or ſeeing the Beginnings and Tendency of the firſt Movers of Matter, and obſerving the Approaches of Things to one another.

Knowledge is like that of an able Architect, who is perfectly acquainted with the Nature of the Materials of the Structure, knows the Changes and Accidents they are liable to, and judges accordingly of their Strength and Duration.

Sagacity, like that of a penetrating Politician, who, by well knowing the Paſſions, Virtues, and Vices of Men, finds their Inclinations, and forms a Judgment, by what will gratifie their Inclinations and Intereſts, what Actions may be expected from them.

And if we conſider this ſame Species of Knowledge, but withal, how

Im-

IMMENSE it is in GOD, after the ſame manner we do His other Attributes, nothing can more eaſily ſatisfie our Curioſity, than accounting for His Actions from ſuch *Sagacity*, and ſo agreeable to the Infinite Wiſdom his Productions and Agency diſcovers. And to talk of Agency, Providence, and compelling Actions, and then 'foreknowing them, are very jarring Inconſiſtencies to a rational Enquirer.

For, how ridiculous wou'd it be in a Mechanick, after making a Machine to go eight Days, and then pretend to prognoſticate, with a formal wiſe Foreſight, that at Midnight this ſhall ſtrike twelve Strokes upon a Bell, and about a Week hence the Weight ſhall touch the Ground, and the Motion ceaſe! Is it not prophane Jeſting to compliment GOD with Foreknowledge, when the utmoſt intended by it is only the aforegoing? Or elſe, like a Prince, who hath condemn'd a Man to be executed on ſuch a Day a Month hence, and ſhall then form an Aſtrological Scheme, and pretend to 'foreſee, that his Life will expire in Thirty Days.

After

After this manner of Thinking of GOD's Foreknowledge there is a total Excluſion of PROVIDENCE, however ſome may ſhuffle off the Conſequence (tho' were the preceding Suppoſition real and apparent Truth, the Conſequence muſt be taken, but this hath appear'd to the contrary) for *Providence*, at this rate, is mending the Machine, interrupting his own Directions, altering his Productions, and changing his Reſolutions.

But a wiſe Politician, when by his *Sagacity* he hath diſcover'd Mens Intentions and Actions, can very often break in upon, and interrupt their Tranſactions, by introducing new Objects to divert them from what he likes not, or bringing Men of contrary Intereſts and Paſſions together, who will thwart one another: But they, in theſe, are *Free Agents*; and a wary Man, if he perceives his Paſſion or Appetite made a Property of, will not be turn'd out of his Way by it.

If in examining how we came by the Notion of Providence, we find any *real Appearances* agreeable to this, it will be very ſatisfactory.

All the Means we have of diſcovering a Providence, is, we ſometimes diſcern *Interpoſitions* and *Preventions* in Human Affairs, and when we find a Concurrence of Things remote, not naturally attach'd to one another, yet meet together to break off ſome great Affair, the Effect ſurprizes us; but, I doubt, we rather blindly before than clearly, attributed them to Providence, for want of ſome other Way of accounting for them. Thoſe Notions of *Decrees*, *Foreordination*, and *Neceſſity* of Human Actions, always diſtracted and confounded us: But when we conſider, that the Sword *is not* by Thunder ſtruck out of the Hand of the Murtherer, but Men are introduc'd to interrupt and prevent one another, or a new Object ſhall excite them to chuſe a new Action, the Myſtery is clear'd up: For 'tis certain, that all the Events in which Providence interpoſes, are brought about by ſuch-like *natural* Means; and it is only bringing Things proper for the Purpoſe in the Way, and not working *ſupernatural* Miracles.

And on this manner are we to look for the Interpoſition of *Providence*, and *only* on this manner do we find it; in

a

a regular leading and directing Things to one another, like a *ſagacious* Politician, the Actions of which Things are not neceſſarily impel'd by this *Politician*.

Theſe Events are ſurprizing, but the Means ordinary; here is no abrupt diſturbing of Natural Order, as if the Agent did not know all the Uſes of Things, or that Things were not perfectly fitted for all the Uſes they are wanted for.

I have obſerv'd, that moſt Perſons who run into theſe Notions of GOD, contrary to his known Attributes, do it by Negligence, in not conſidering, that theſe *Attributes* are real *Appearances to Senſe*, but take them as form'd *firſt* in the Imaginations of Men, and *then* apply'd to GOD. So, if they meet with any Thing that thwarts 'em, it is a Matter of ſmall moment, not worth their Regard: But if they would conſider, that we evidently ſee by the Works of the Univerſe, an infinite *Perfection*, *Invention*, *Wiſdom*, *Juſtice*, and *Agency*; when we would expreſs the Aggregate, or Sum, of theſe ſeveral Terms in *one* Term, as theſe Attributes ſeem to belong to ſome *one* Agent, this *one* Term is the Word

GOD. And this is as adequate a *Term*, with proper *Appearances* and *Realities* attach'd to it, as the Word an *Hundred* is, if we conſider the ſeveral Sums, *Threeſcore*, *Thirty*, and *Ten* apart; but if we would expreſs the Amount in *one* Word, we call it an *Hundred*. It muſt therefore be remember'd, that when any Thing is offer'd againſt the Juſtice and Wiſdom of GOD, according to the *Common* and *Familiar* Notions of Juſtice and Wiſdom, it cannot be apply'd to this Author of the Univerſe.

If People wou'd conſult their Senſes for their Notions and Words, they would neither ſo readily accept nor reject them, till they had found what *Realities* were related to them, or whether any or no.

As to Man's Foreknowledge, ſuch as Preſcience in Dreams, and the like: What we are ſo ſurpriz'd with, is only the *Means* of the Mind's conveying to our Corporeal Senſes what to its ſelf is real Intuitive Knowledge, and perhaps ſome Sagacity; and the Manner of Conveyance is extraordinary, the

the Knowledge ordinary; and the Affinity between this and the Manner of receiving all common Knowledge of Things at a diſtance clearly illuſtrates this.

For, there is nothing in Aſtrology, but what may be found in a caſual ſetting down the Names of the Stars; nor any thing in the ancient Auguries by Flights of Birds, or Inſpection of the Entrails of ſacrific'd Beaſts; but that caſting Dice on a Fortune-book, or throwing off Coffee-grounds, are as truly and naturally fit for the Purpoſe as any of them; and if the Effects have at any time been found, yet any Thing is capable of producing the ſame that can raiſe an entire Expectation, and cauſe a ſolemn Amuſement and Attention; for they may then become Symbols like Writing and Speaking, by which the Mind hath Liberty to explain it ſelf: And from hence may be accounted for an Obſervation, That the Second Sight in *Scotland* loſes Ground, and fails, as the People grow more Learned; for they then become Inquiſitive, and the Amuſement and Attention is not ſolemn enough, nor entire.

Ano-

Another objected *Conſequence* of Man's Free Agency, is, That he is a God in his Sphere. But, Is there any Matter of Fact more evident? What confines him within the reach of his Senſes? He perceives nor judges on any Thing but Matter, and all *that* obeys him; Hath he not moſt immenſe and uncontroulable Power? He ſeparates and compounds, deſtroys and builds; and where his Members can't extend, he invents Engines to effect his Purpoſes: His Arms reach not far, but he can kill at a diſtance by a Machine; the Materials ſerve him, and the Animal dies: He can't pull up the Rocks with his Hands, but he makes Gunpowder to rend them to pieces, and it is done: He ſees nothing but Matter, and he doth what he pleaſes with that. Nothing interrupts Men, but only as they interrupt one another.

Nor is there any more conſpicuous Inſtance of the Wonderful Wiſdom of a Great Author of Man's Being, than in the Confinement of him to *this* narrow Sphere of *Five Senſes*, till he hath learn'd by Experience how to

uſe.

uſe and apply them; and the ill Uſe he often makes of *this* LIBERTY ſhews an Abſolute Neceſſity, for his own Good, thus to circumſcribe him; for his WILL is apparently uncontroulable, therefore is his *Perception* confin'd.

How happily is Man endow'd with REASON to direct him, if he will follow it! if he will not, to GOD he can do no Harm; to himſelf he doth, by running on to Actions without his Judgment, and the evil Effects of his Follies attend him.

We have no greater Notion of Wiſdom, than of a Man having attain'd *Sagacious Foreſight*, judiciouſly applying Things, and acting with them according to it: And if we conſider ſuch an one, with that immenſe Invention which accompanies a clear *Knowledge*; alſo ſilently regarding the *Intuition* of his Mind, and obſerving the firſt Traces of Providence, ſetting his JUDGMENT above all, to conduct and balance his Thoughts and Actions, and adhering to *this* with invincible *Fortitude*; What is not this Man able to perform? How great!

great! how GOD like! and how capable of diſpenſing the moſt Valuable Benefits to the World! Yet this is no other than all Mankind potentially are; tho' ſome excel not Brutes more than *this Man* doth too many of the Human Race.

FINIS.

POST-

POSTSCRIPT.

HOwever ſome Perſons may complain for want of Liberty to write *and* ſpeak *their Minds, I do declare, I have found my ſelf under no ſuch Reſtraint, (nor can I ſee that any Man, who hath any thing to communicate for the general Good of Mankind, is under any ſuch Confinement here) I have ſaid all that I even intended, or wiſh'd to have ſaid, on this great and difficult Subject, and have therefore put a full End to it, having nothing more to add: But finding that we have not yet come up to the Number of Pages uſual in a Book of this Price, I ſhall take the Opportunity of the Room I have to ſpare, to ſatisfie the Curioſity of ſome Perſons concerning thoſe Occurrences which happen'd to* it *and* its Author, *and conſider the Complaints againſt it of* Obſcurity.

I firſt of all acknowledge, That there may be yet ſome Sentences *which have eſcap'd Correction, and wanting Expletives; and there may alſo remain many Faults in the Diction which can't be juſtified: For theſe I beg Pardon, and hope the Greatneſs of the Subject, and Beneficial End obtain'd thereby, will engage the moſt Candid (who are always the moſt*

Judicious) Readers to conſider with Allowances, and forgive. Neither ſhall I diſpute the Method of it; but I cannot admit it to be proper to Criticiſe on it after a Poetical manner.

I know as well as any of them, that the taking Notice of ſome of thoſe Objections in the firſt Chapter of the Supplement *is too mean and trifling for the Dignity of the Subject; but I think there was an abſolute Neceſſity to take all the Pains I cou'd (which was not a little) to obtain what Objections cou'd poſſibly be rais'd againſt it (eſpecially as it was publiſh'd in Parts, and not at once) with a Deſign to obviate them. Some think it wou'd have been better, and more ſolemn, to have it collected in one continued Body, and not in ſo many Parts, as, the* Book *firſt, then a* Letter, *and after that, a* Supplement *and* Poſtſcript; *but I ſee no Reaſon to be aſham'd of the Caution us'd in trying it by publiſhing it in* Parts, *to prevent breaking in abruptly upon the* Publick Peace: *Nor do I pleaſe my ſelf in any thing more, than in bringing about ſo Great and Uſeful a Work (which all Men of Senſe wiſh'd for, but dreaded the Attempt) without making any Diſturbance, or giving any Offence to the* Religion *and* Laws *of our Country.*

As to thoſe who complain of Obſcurity, *I doubt I muſt adviſe them to look into themſelves, and ſee if 'tis not for want of* Attention.

The plaineſt Propoſition in Euclid, *even an Article in the common* Multiplication-Table, *is obſcure to Perſons who are not acquainted with ſomething relating to the Terms, and will not take the Pains to acquaint themſelves with 'em, and compare 'em.*

Yet I muſt admit, that the Novelty of it makes ſome Excuſe for them; and tho', That Human Judgment

ment is infallible, *is an immediate ſelf-evident and unconteſtable Truth, yet the Sound of the Words is ſtrange and harſh, becauſe 'tis uncommon, and what the Ear hath not been us'd to; but the greateſt Bigot in the World never diſputed it; he never went about to perſwade you, that* Human Judgment *does not determine* Bread *to be* Bread, *but tells you, You muſt not regard* it.

Therefore we can never admit of the general Charge of Obſcurity; *for the* Theſis *laid down, That* Human Judgment is infallible, *and the Uſe and Application of it in diſcovering Truth, by bringing all Diſputes to general and ſelf-evident Propoſitions, is fully and clearly demonſtrated, and render'd practical, and the grand Deſign aim'd at is moſt aſſuredly attain'd. And we are even got farther than this; for it is not enough that we have convinc'd our Readers of the Benefit and Reality of it, but the Uſe of it is enforc'd; the Laws of* Reaſon *here laid down* EXECUTE *themſelves, and* command *an Antagoniſt to* obey *them: For tho' in all other Arguments, by all other Ways of Argumentation, a Man may eſcape by* Sophiſtry, *and may be provided with* Sophiſtry *enough to impoſe on his Adverſary, and too often on himſelf, yet here 'tis impoſſible; for the very naming a ſelf-evident Propoſition, and demanding that what is offer'd be from ſome Appearances to every body's Common Senſe, and, that the Concluſion or Propoſition be adapted to the general Common Senſe of Mankind, a ſurprizing Awe ſtrikes at once the Mind of the Antagoniſt.*

To ſhew this invincible Force and Execution of its own Laws, we will form theſe two Inſtances, and ſuppoſe that a Man hath a mind to argue againſt either, or both, of the following ſelf-evident Propoſitions.

1. *Nine times Seven is Sixty-three.*

2. *The ſame Evidences enforce the ſame Determination from every Man in the World, becauſe the Judgment is involuntary and infallible.*

Now, if a Man is never ſo ſpitefully inclin'd to oppoſe theſe Propoſitions, and be only prevail'd on to forbear Noiſe and Loquacity, and to ſet himſelf down and collect his Arguments in writing, the Diſpute is at an end, and you'll hear no more of him.

The Reaſon is, the Oppoſer hath juſt ſuch an Awe on his Spirits as a detected Criminal hath before a great and auguſt Court, of whoſe Juſtice and Power he can't find any reaſon to complain or object againſt.

As I have taken Care (in the Recapitulation *more eſpecially) to ſay as little in vain as poſſible, ſo you will find there's a vaſt deal in deſiring a Man to write down the Propoſal he hath to offer; and 'tis by this means the Awe is produc'd: for while he ſits ſtill, and is endeavouring to collect his deſign'd oppoſing Argument, he finds he is writing to every-body's Common Senſe, whether he will or no, and to a Man who will take nothing on his, the Oppoſer's, nor his own partial Thoughts, but ſubmits to Univerſal Reaſon: And therefore this Oppoſer finds he is arguing to his own Common Senſe too, and to a Man's whom he knows diſcovers what his (the Oppoſer's) Common Senſe determines on the Caſe. Nor can a Man fall into any other manner of Arguing, or have any thing elſe to argue too, but general Common Senſe, when once the Word* Believe *is rejected; and, as I have not met with any Objection to the throwing it out, ſo I don't ſee it poſſible I ever ſhou'd meet with any Man that will contend for the Uſe of it in an Argument, becauſe it confeſſes an evil Deſign in the Argument, or Weakneſs in it, or in a Man's Capacity.*

And

And 'tis THIS *which is of the greateſt Conſequence in the whole Thing; it is the* FINISHING STROKE, *which hath clear'd up all the Miſts of Darkneſs and Confuſion the World hath lain under, like the ſudden letting in of a bright Ray of the Sun, by which the Deformity of Error, as well as the Weakneſſes and Impoſitions, which have confounded* Human Underſtanding, *are expos'd and remov'd; and this refulgent* Light of Reaſon *hath now Liberty to ſhew* Truth *in all its ſplendid Luſtre and Beauty, with its Enemies under its Feet: And* this *hath alſo made the Work compleat and perfect.*

Nor can I ſee my ſelf vain in expecting that Ingenious Perſons, engag'd in Experimental Philoſophy, *or any other way endeavouring to improve Arts and Sciences, for the Benefit of Mankind, and have nothing but* Truth *to ſet forth, will admit of the Uſe of the Word* Believe *in any Argumentation.*

The whole Manner of Reaſoning is alſo worth their Thoughts; for theſe ſelf-evident Propoſitions, when they have form'd and collected thei Examinations into them, are not arbitrary and unalterable Concluſions, but are ſtill liable to have new Appearances to Senſe, when diſcover'd, added to 'em, or ſubſtracted.

And from hence it is that Error *hath no Cover or Refuge, for when Men are once us'd to, and reſolute in, examining Things by this* Univerſal *Common Senſe, they will find, that* no conſiſtent Propoſition can ever be form'd of an Error *.

This is another Paradox, but it will be found to hold good univerſally in all Caſes Religious, Moral, and Philoſophical; even the moſt ſubtile † Errors, as well as the more common and leſs perplex'd, muſt be immediately expos'd and deſerted by their Champions, ex-

* *Vid.* p. 150, 183, 244. † *p.* 227.

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except where ſuperior Force of Arms, Law, and Authority ſupply the Deficiency of Arguments. A Prieſt *and a* Troop of Dragoons *have ſuch effectual Ways of Perſwaſion, that I know no ſurer Way of refuting than with a good Commandant and two Troops.*

That every Man hath a Right to uſe his own Reaſon, or follow his own Opinions, in all Speculative Matters, either Religious or Philoſophical, hath with great Force and Juſtice been ſhewn by many among us, more eſpecially of late in ſome of our weekly Papers, the Britiſh, *and ſometimes the* London Journals, *but this is ſhort of the Mark; for a Man may be in the wrong, and have a Right to continue ſo, for what any other Man hath to do with him; but this goes no farther than ſetting up Liberty of Reaſoning (and indeed may be a uſeful Introduction to ours) yet in it ſelf 'tis only partial Reaſoning, that of a Man's own, or of a Body or Party to whom he belongs or fancies: This is improperly call'd* Reaſon, *and is rather* Opinion.

And therefore 'tis that Men in the right *are expos'd to the hazard of being deceiv'd by another Man's ſpecious Pretences to better Reaſon; and this comes to paſs for want of an* Universal Criterion, *by which every Man in the World can't help being determin'd, and to which they ſubmit their Opinions or Reaſons. And for want of* this Authority, *thoſe who have been in the right, have been ſo by chance, or at beſt but in part, and unable to perſevere, or to juſtifie themſelves.*

But what we have been here doing, is, ſhewing a Way of detecting Error, *attaining* Truth, *and fixing an* Univerſal Criterion, *which is an* Authority *for juſtifying* Truth, *ſuch a one whoſe Laws execute themſelves, and which needs no other Power*

to

to enforce or protect it, but every Man's own Conſcience, *which convicts him, and obliges him to ſubmit to it.*

And as this never was done before, and is here accompliſh'd, 'tis no Wonder if a great many can't immediately ſee ſo unexpected a Novelty; and many of thoſe that do ſee it can ſcarce perſwade themſelves to own it, but wait to ſee who ſhall firſt begin a Declaration of it; theſe muſt have Patience till it is more cultivated and apply'd to common Caſes, and us'd publickly by Others, till ſome noted Men have declar'd their Manner of Thinking *and* Reaſoning *to be according to it, and perhaps commented on it.*

But ſince I find it is tranſlating into other Languages, I think it an indiſpenſable Duty to my Country to clear thoſe Truly Worthy *and* Right Honourable Perſons, *who then had, and ſtill have, (under His Majeſty) the Adminiſtration of Publick Affairs in this preſent Happy State of the Nation; That the Trouble I met with proceeded not from them originally, nor did I ever know, or was inform'd, this Treatiſe gave any Offence to them or any one truly Good and Religious Man of Senſe in the Kingdom, (for indeed it was ſufficiently try'd and taken care of two Years before) and if there was any thing in reality deſign'd, it came from only one or two of that Party who have no Way of bringing about their wicked Ends, and deſtroying the Peace and Happineſs of their Country, but by interrupting publick Buſineſs (at critical Times as this happen'd to be) with unſeaſonable Interpoſitions, if poſſible to ſpirit up a ſtupid bigoted mad Mob, with the ſpecious Name of* Religion, *and to oppoſe whatever is offer'd for the Improvement of Mankind, for Encreaſe of Knowledge and Felicity, and ſtrengthening the preſent happy Conſtitution of the Government,*

ment, in order to perpetuating our Liberties, muſt be the Conſequence of this. But theſe Traiterous Impoſtors deſign the contrary; 'tis Slaves *they want, to lead and dictate to, and to teach Men Knowledge and Improvement of Underſtanding, is making ſuch Perſons direct and profeſt Enemies: 'Tis therefore no Wonder if ſome one cou'd be found, either hot with mad Zeal, or ſubtile enough to puſh on ſome meaner Tool, to make a miſchievous Oppoſition to what himſelf, tho' wiſh'd done, yet wou'd not publickly own, 'till by ſuch Means he had try'd the Succeſs.*

But I wou'd not have ſuch a Scandal carried into Foreign Parts, or deliver'd down to Poſterity, as part of the Hiſtory of this Author and the Treatiſe, That the Author was barbarouſly us'd by his Country for it. 'Tis true, it muſt be known to be a great Detriment and Damage, not eaſily to be recover'd where no Reparation ariſes from the Thing it ſelf, nor hath been, or is expected to be made: But the Publick is not to be reflected on to ſucceeding Ages for this: The moſt that ever I, or any of my Friends, cou'd learn of it, was, That it was a piece of Ironical Drollery (of a certain Young Noble Lord) which being ill timed, created ſome Heat, and was either improv'd into, or miſtaken for, a ſerious Complaint: But when we were produc'd in Three ſucceſſive Terms, neither Adverſary, Objection, or Complaint appear'd; and therefore I look on it as an adverſe Accident, ſuch as Mortals are liable to in ſpite of all their Care and Caution, like the burning of an Houſe, or a Loſs by any other vexatious unforeſeen Law-ſuit.

But I had one very agreeable Advantage *by it, which recompens'd me for the Trouble, and that was, it recommended me to the Notice of one of the moſt Worthy Perſons of this Age,* viz. *Dr.* Richard Mead,

Mead, *Fellow of the College of Phyſicians and the Royal Society, who, tho' I was altogether unknown to him before, yet hearing of my Confinement on this account, with an indefatigable Induſtry undertook and perfected my Deliverance.*

And therefore, tho' I have not in a formal manner made a faſhional Dedication to him, yet if the World receives any Benefit by this Work, his Name ought in common Juſtice to be deliver'd with it, to any diſtant Time or Place to which it ſhall go; tho' I can add nothing to his eſtabliſh'd Character by this, *his own Labours (as well as Liberality in encouraging Others to improve uſeful Arts and Sciences) have long ſince fix'd and perpetuated* that *with ſuch univerſal Conſent and Approbation, as but few in the moſt exalted Stations have been ſo happy to attain. Nor am I a ſingle Inſtance of his Generoſity of this kind; there is continually ſome New Thing diſcover'd, either for publick or private Benefit, which demonſtrates him to be a General Friend to Mankind.*

I have here a copious and pleaſing Subject to proceed on, were I not ſure to offend where all Perſons of ſuch exalted Virtue are and muſt be offended, who do Good with no other View than a ſecret Satisfaction to themſelves of having made others happy.

I therefore unwillingly leave off, but can't help confeſſing, that the Motive which induc'd me to write and annex this to the Treatiſe, was, to have an Opportunity of doing thoſe Great and Worthy Perſons Juſtice, by ſetting Things in a true Light, freeing my ſelf from the Imputation of Ingratitude, and preventing ſuch falſe and impertinent Accounts of Things which ſome Bookſellers *and their mean ſcan-*

dulous Hirelings impoſe on the World on ſuch Occaſions; for, I think, I have obviated all Objections *in the Courſe of the Work, and don't deſire any other of theſe looſe and tranſient Lines ſhould be reckon'd as part thereof.*

I may expect ſome ſmart Reflection on the Aſſurance I ſeem to have of its Succeſs, and on the Fondneſs and Vanity natural to Authors: *'Tis Time only can decide this between us. I can ſee many Imperfections, ſome of which I am aſham'd of, tho' I can't now help it; and I don't doubt but there are many ingenious Men, who, if they cou'd have done it at all, or had thought proper to have undertook it, wou'd have perform'd it better: Yet I fancy, with all its Faults, if this Syſtem, as contain'd in the* Recapitulation, *could have been publiſh'd to the World as an Original Ancient Piece of Learning, and pretended to have been conceal'd for many Ages, or found now in the Ruins of ſome* antique *Grecian or Roman Building or Monument, it wou'd have met with a different Reception (tho' I have no great Reaſon to complain of* that.) *I can't perſwade my ſelf 'tis any thing worſe for being produc'd in* England, *and Time may bring that about which few at preſent think on, when it comes to be improv'd by ſome abler Hands, and by them render'd more practical and common, as great a Benefit may accrue to the World as it hath at any time receiv'd by Letters: And tho' it ſeems to ſome now to be only a Speculative Matter, it will be found in the end to be a real Deliverance of Mankind from a moſt abject Condition of Miſery, Slavery and Ignorance. People will in a ſhort time ſtand amaz'd to conſider what a wild Wilderneſs of ſavage and ſtupid Brutes the World hath been (eſpecially for ſome Hundreds of Years paſt) for want of knowing*

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the moſt ſimple and natural Uſe and Authority of Common Senſe: *but, What hideous* Monſters *muſt thoſe appear who have hindred their Improvement, and contributed toward the Continuance of it!*

As to the Objection againſt the Immortality of the Soul, *and the contemptible manner ſome ſpeak of its Preſcience, I only deſire them to conſider that Obvious Appearance to Senſe of* Knowledge *being convey'd at a diſtance by Letters, and let them try to account for it, and then tell me if 'tis not leſs wonderful than now and then to ſee a Diſcovery of the Mind's Preſcience by Dreams,* &c. *But I leave this as an evident Matter of Fact, as I have done before, againſt which very few are able to ſhut their Eyes, and which needs no Argument or Perſuaſion to defend or prove it.*

The Notion that Human Actions are neceſſary (which now appears to be a groſs and palpable Fallacy) hath deſtroy'd the very Foundation on which Religion was built in the Minds of many ſpeculative and learned Perſons, and from them deriv'd to Others, which added to a Prejudice againſt all Religion, and any thing that tends towards it, contracted from the Hatred which Gentlemen have againſt having their Common Senſe impos'd on, and which too many Pretenders to teaching and defending Religion ſtill practiſe, makes it no wonder to meet with ſuch Obſtructions.

I wou'd adviſe theſe pretended Champions of Religion to conſider in time what they are about, in attempting to exclude Reaſon *from* Religion, *and I dare preſume further to tell 'em, they will meet with very ill Succeſs, if they endeavour to proceed in* Great Britain. *It is more to their Intereſt to regard what a length we have here gone in the aboveſaid Argu-*

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ment of Liberty *and* Neceſſity, *and how little we are ſhort of a Demonſtration that the Soul of Man is Immortal, and alſo how Providence is here prov'd and accounted for.*

Let them conſider to what particular Practical Religion we wou'd excite Peoples own Curioſity, (the moſt Effectual Way of Perſwaſion) and what Book or Books we wou'd have them learn it from; and when they have done this, I boldly challenge them to ſhew me which of themſelves hath contributed ſo much to the Support, Defence, and Propagation of Religion.

It hath been very common for Theſe to reflect on Rationaliſts as Excentrical *Perſons, with airy wild Flights of Fancy only, without any regular Scheme of Principles; this we hope is now put an End to.*

We ſee here a Syſtem of Principles *immoveably fix'd by the unalterable Laws of* Nature, *which no Authority can deſtroy, or Interpolators corrupt, but hath a Teſtimony of their Truth in the Common Senſes and Conſciences of every living Man; tho' Books may be burnt, and Letters wholly loſt, yet* Reaſon *muſt continue ſo long as there is any Being that hath the bright Image of its* Great Creator, *the diſtinguiſhing Property of the Human Species.*